

GETHSEMANE AND CALVARY:

OR,

A DEVOTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

OF THE

SUFFERINGS AND DEATH

OF THE

REDEEMER.

BY A LADY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

BY THE LATE

F. HURTER, MISSIONARY.

CALCUTTA :

PRINTED BY J. THOMAS, BAPTIST MISSION PRESS.

1851.

NOTICE.

THE Manuscript of the following pages was committed to me by my late esteemed friend, the Translator, with a request that I would correct the prose, and put the poetical quotations, of which he had merely given a literal translation, into English verse. These I have endeavoured to do, without interfering with the sentiments of the original translation; and hope the intrinsic excellence of the subject, and the spirit of fervent piety which pervades the work, may serve to counterbalance the acknowledged defects of style and composition.

J. PARSONS.

Monghir, August 17th, 1849.

INTRODUCTION.

O LORD JESUS, my crucified Saviour, thou knowest the desire, which thy Spirit hath excited in my heart, henceforth to sanctify all the hours of my life to the commemoration of thy sufferings; and, O compassionate Redeemer, as, at the close of thy life on earth, thou didst spend a whole night and day in deepest agony, so may I appropriately spend every evening, every sleepless night, every day, yea, every hour in the remembrance of thy griefs. An annual celebration of thy death is too scanty a tribute of affection; let me rather contemplate, every night, thy agony in the garden, and review, every day, the suffering and dying day of my most faithful Friend and Redeemer! How great a favour, that I am even permitted to do this! And how much greater still the favour that thou hast stirred me up to such an exercise! Give me now, likewise, the strength I require for this sweet and happy engagement! Awake me to it afresh, O Lord Jesus, every day, every hour; for thou knowest that without thee I can do nothing, but with thee and through thee I can do all things. O precious Lamb! wean me from all that is of the earth, and make me cleave to thee alone! Let me not feel happy in any place or at any time, if my soul be not occupied with the meditation of thy sufferings! This shall I esteem an unspeakable mercy. Has not thy precious blood procured me a blessing on every moment of my life? And it is only in meditating, continually on thy dying love, which thou hast manifested

in the closing scenes of thy unspotted life, that I can secure that blessing.

Alas! how many of my hours, days, and years have passed uselessly away, bearing no fruit for eternity: let me therefore number my remaining days and hours, which perhaps are but few, the more carefully, that I may not add to my misimprovement of the season of grace allotted to me. Yea, graciously forgive my misuse of time, and the great coldness I have evinced hitherto! O Lord Jesus! I know it well, and have often confessed to thee with tears and compunction of heart what is expressed in the following lines,

O Saviour, I am bound to thee,
Each hour—each moment of my age:
Henceforth shall thy commands alone
My powers of heart and flesh engage.

Oh, that it may be thus with me, merciful Redeemer! It is true my wicked heart, ever prone to stray, may be often averse to it; my carnal mind may be engrossed by visible things; and my wandering thoughts may be distracted by mere trifles. It is, therefore, thy unwearied pastoral care, and thy good Spirit, which chiefly, nay, which alone can effectually bring me back, again and again, to the happy centre. Thus only can new aspirations after thee, and a blissful acquaintance with thee, be hourly created in my soul; my corrupt taste for the things of this world be totally removed; and, in its stead, a blessed hunger and thirst after thee, and intimate fellowship with thee, be increasingly excited within me. Oh, that thou mightest become, and ever continue to be, my all in all, and henceforth nought possess my heart but Jesus crucified!

O Holy Spirit, day by day,
The charming Lamb to me display;
Discover, with increasing light,
The Bridegroom's beauties to my sight:
O Lamb! O Bridegroom! still on thee,
In life and death, my hope shall be.

To this end, I, by thine own assistance, surrender thee my heart, that thou mayest reveal therein the glory of Christ crucified, and if it withdraw itself from under thy blessed influence, Oh, bring it there again, and thus show towards me a truly paternal fidelity. I surrender thee my understanding, that thou mayest enlighten it with thy heavenly illumination to know Jesus by a living faith. Bring my foolish reason into captivity to the obedience of Christ; prevent me from feeling at all offended at the lowliness and sufferings of my glorious Redeemer; teach me to say in truth to Jesus,

When, Lord, I see thee made the sinners' jest,
Then doth thy lovely form seem loveliest:
Through life, to gaze on thee be my employ,
Thy sufferings constitute my dearest joy!

Take also my corrupt will under thy special gracious discipline, and expel from it all cursed, though often closely hidden, love of sin, all natural enmity against Jesus, all perverseness, even of the most subtle form, all disobedience to thy soft voice, and all love of the world, together with all improper love of self! To thee, O gracious Spirit, I surrender my memory. Let it perpetually retain the recollection of my crucified and risen Saviour; and, when my remembrance of him becomes faint, do thou instantly revive it! I surrender thee my guilt-stained conscience also; make it very tender. As the eye cannot endure the least atom in it, so let my conscience be disquieted by the least stain of sin, nor let it be calmed by any thing but by purification in the blood of Jesus, and by the enjoyment of that precious peace, which thou bestowest! Keep my wandering thoughts under strict discipline! Gather them indefatigably around Jesus, like hungry bees about the honeyed flowers! Sanctify my words and works, my sleeping and my waking hours, my whole life, my afflictions, and my death, through the blood of the Lamb, and

through it may my enjoyment of the means of grace and of all temporal gifts be blessed to me !

In Jesus' love be occupied
The few short days I yet may live :
O Saviour, ever near abide ;
My future life to thee I give.

In thy name, O Lord Jesus, and in reliance on thy gracious blessing, I will, for my daily use, endeavour to attain a thorough acquaintance with the successive stages of those heavy sufferings, which thou tookest upon thee during each hour of the last night and day of thy abode on earth, that they may recur with a continual freshness to my thoughts. May my purpose be pleasing in thy sight, and vouchsafe to each meditation and each prayer a blessing purchased by thy blood. Amen !

GETHISEMANE AND CALVARY.

FIRST HOUR.

Thursday Evening, from 6 to 7 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

DURING this hour the Lord Jesus greatly desired to eat the passover with his disciples before he suffered. He had eaten the passover with his disciples several times previously, but we do not read that, at any other time, he had had such a desire. He now so greatly longed for it, because it was to be the last time, and because after the eating of it, he intended to institute the precious holy supper, and to accomplish by suffering, bleeding, and dying, the work of redemption, entrusted to him by his Father, thus abolishing the passover of the Old Testament. He well knew what floods of suffering, and what a baptism were awaiting him; but his great love towards us rendered our salvation dearer to him than his own life, and produced in him such an earnest desire for this baptism of sufferings, (Luke xii. 50,) and at this last passover our redemption was his meat. Thus this type, among others, was to be superseded, and, in its stead, he was to give us himself in the holy supper. Luke xxii. 15.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus, who art the true and proper Paschal Lamb, thou Antitype of all the types, what tender desires warmed thy breast for me, and my eternal welfare! Let a like pure and fervent desire after thee, ever constitute my

chief preparative for the holy supper! This would be a genuine hungering and thirsting. Oh, grant me grace, that I may daily, during this evening hour, remember the desire, which at this season thy heart was cherishing; yea, do thou thyself, by thy Spirit, remind me of it, and through it may there be kindled in my heart, alas! so cold, fervent longings after thee and my complete redemption! Enable me to bring my evil and indolent heart hourly into communion with thy good and fervent heart, that thy heart may warm mine, and revive it, and make it like-minded with thyself!

My soul with blissful ardours fill;
Melt into thine own mould my will!

But should my easily distracted heart, through the busy engagements of the day wander from the society of thy faithful heart, then may this hour, which thou didst so ardently desire, be the happy time, when I may draw near to thy loving heart, to become again one heart and soul with thee! Let me esteem it my greatest unhappiness, when my heart so far departs from thine, as to become like a stranger in thine estimation, so that thou canst no more confide thyself to me! Oh, that I may as willingly sacrifice myself to thee, with all that I possess, as thou didst sacrifice thyself for me; and be as ready to endure scorn and sufferings, and to undergo death itself for thee, as thou wast to suffer death for me! May my meditations on thy ardent wish produce all this in me! Amen.

SECOND HOUR.

Thursday Evening, from 7 to 8 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

AT this hour the Saviour ate the last passover with his disciples. John lay as usual on Jesus' breast, and after

the passover, Jesus instituted his precious holy supper. As a father, whose decease is at hand, he did not wish to die, ere he had made his last will, and constituted his children sole heirs of all his property, and all the fruits and merits of his life, sufferings, and death. So near were we poor men to his heart; so kind were his intentions, when about to withdraw his visible presence from the world. There he contrived and instituted means by which he might be with us until the end of the world, in a method still more perfect, and more consistent with the economy of faith. In this precious supper, we enjoy Christ himself, the treasure of all treasures, together with all that pertains to everlasting salvation and happiness. O incomprehensible love! O inestimable supper! After the institution of this ordinance, the Redeemer, with surprising condescension, washes the disciples' feet. Matthew xxvi. 26—30. John xiii. 2—17.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus! my powers are unequal to the task of finding any adequate representation of thy mercy. Yet grant me, by the power of thy Holy Spirit, to reflect upon it, so far as my ability can reach. Especially assist me to direct my thoughts and meditations to it in that evening hour when thou wast occupied in the institution of the holy supper! It is the hour when I am accustomed to take my supper. Oh, that my spiritual hunger and thirst may exceed that which is corporeal, and that I may hourly sup with thee by faith and thou with me! Oh, may I also, as a true disciple, by real repentance and by living faith, feed often upon thee, as the means of my eternal salvation, in the commemoration of this sacred ordinance! Oh, that I may well appreciate the importance and excellency of this holy supper, set the highest value on thy Testament, and

also bear the fruits which this heavenly manna should produce ! O Lord Jesus, do thou create them in me !

Thanksgiving, praise and adoration be to thee for thy rich Testament. Not till we enter on a sinless eternity can we address to thee songs of praises worthy of this subject, for here we are too weak and inactive, and perceive but a small portion of the treasures, which are bequeathed to us in this Testament.

My Saviour, that little place, which thy beloved disciple occupied, is most suitable for me also. How very needful and desirable for me, O Jesus, to lie upon thy breast ! True, John had not shown himself so unworthy of thy love ; his heart was sincere and faithful towards thee ; he remained with thee steadfast unto death ; while I find just the contrary in me. But, O my Saviour,

Thou lookest not for gifts and worthiness ;
No hedge of thorns prevents our free access :
In thy sweet bosom sinners find a home ;
Though ne'er so wretched, all are free to come.

Yea, it is towards the most miserable, that thou art the most condescending ; them thou comfortest first, because they stand in the greatest need. This, then, encourageth me, too, to lay myself on thy faithful breast to be comforted, and to seek in the sweet milk of grace my nourishment and strength. Lord Jesus, the mother's breast belongs above all others, to the smallest child. Now such am I, the least of all thy children. The most unhealthy child needs most to be strengthened by the healing virtues of the mother's breast.

O Physician, thou dost quickly
Pity to the helpless shew,
Who diseased, and worn, and sickly,
Are oppressed with deepest woe.

Look, Oh, look on my condition,
More diseased sure none can be ;
Hear, Oh, hear thy child's petition,
And in mercy pity me !

What can more display thy glory,
 Or thy more than mother's heart,
 Than to hear my woeful story,
 And the needed grace impart ?

The mother hastes to give her breast to satisfy a weeping infant. O Lord Jesus, thou knowest how often I have to bring my complaints before thee with tears ; console me on thy breast, for well I know that there thy weeping children are satisfied with sweetest milk.

Dearest Saviour, whenever I take my meals, let me, like John, lean upon thy breast, while I enjoy thy gifts ; then shall my soul likewise be satisfied and refreshed ! When I sleep, may thy wounded breast be my pillow, and when I awake, may I still be reclining on thy breast ! And when I partake of thy supper, let me do it, leaning on thy breast, O Jesus, and eat and drink with a childlike feeling, and receive thee, and commune with thee as a child ; and, with a filial confidence, ask and receive every needful blessing from thee ! Oh, that I may be a John in character and privilege ! Oh, that I may be spiritually as a little child in the dispositions of my heart ! Lord, make thou me such an one !

O thou perfect example of true humility and self-abasement, when thou wast going forth to the Mount of Olives, thou washedst thy disciples' feet. Thy great condescension astonished even them, and it was truly a mysterious deed, as thou madest evident by thy words to Peter, when, though with a laudable intention, he refused to accept this love of thine. Yea, indeed, my Saviour, if thou dost not wash me, I have no part with thee ; and even if my feet only are unwashed by thee, I have no part with thee. O my good Master, wash me wholly ! With Peter would I say, " Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head," yea, my whole self ! It is true thou hast already washed me in baptism, but alas ! I have again defiled my-

self, and defile myself daily. Oh, wash me thoroughly with the blood, and the pure water, which flowed from thy side, converting my heart by genuine faith ! And even when thou hast thus washed me from all the pollutions of the flesh and spirit, I still, in my Christian course, daily defile my feet ; oh then, cleanse me again and again that no spot remain on me ! Let me, fully conscious of that impurity, which still adheres to me, continually haste to the fountain of thy blood, that I may be now and ever a pure bride to thee ! Amen.

THIRD HOUR.

Thursday Evening, from 8 to 9 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

DURING this hour, Jesus sang a hymn, and went with his disciples into the garden of Olives. The Lord Jesus, who, in all his works, sanctified himself for our sakes, did not omit to give thanks. He sang hymns, that he might thus make our thanksgivings and praises acceptable to the Father. Afterwards he went, with divine courage, into the garden of Gethsemane to suffer. On this occasion, he was not so led, as when they led him afterwards before the judges, and to the mount of Golgotha, but his going proceeded from pure love, and was a proof that he took his sufferings willingly upon him. Oh ! how has he thus atoned for our unwillingness to suffer, through which, especially in the anticipation, we often strive against it, and are loth to enter into it. His great love so constrained him to suffer, that he did not wait until even the next day, but chose the very next hour. The dear Saviour was influenced by love, inured to spend his nights in our cause, for he had already passed many a night on the mountains in prayer for us. Sleep was not so dear to him, that he

would forget us for its sake, although rest was needful and refreshing to him as well as to us ; because he was also a true man. We love to sleep at night, and to take our rest ;

But faithful my Redeemer wakes,
And cancels sin's dire bond for me :
Hereby He Death's dominion breaks,
And sets my captive spirit free.

Matthew xxvi. 30.

PRAYER.

O my Redeemer, give me also a grateful heart, like thine own, towards God, and towards thee, my greatest benefactor. Oh, that not an hour may pass without my loving and praising thee ! Especially, let me begin and conclude all my meals with praises, and when I have partaken of thy precious supper, then make my heart to be a true altar of thanksgiving, on which the fire of grateful love may brightly burn !

Thy walk to the garden be the theme of my meditation in this evening hour ! Draw me truly after thee, O thou magnet of love, that I, as one of thy disciples, may accompany thee to the mount of Olives ! Thy readiness to pursue this path of sufferings be an atonement for my unwillingness to take up the cross ! On this path, thou, as High Priest, didst bear me on thy faithful heart. How didst thou hasten to begin the work of redemption ! Oh, how didst thou, as my substitute, proceed, with earnest pace, to the scene of action !

Let thy going to the garden sanctify all my walks of recreation ; may they all be enjoyed in the recollection of this thy walk ! Finally, may I also devote my nights to thee ! At this hour, men prefer to take their rest, but thou wentest to suffer. Thousand thanks be to thee, O Lord Jesus, for all thy sleepless nights, and for all the schemes of love, which thou hadst in view, when thou

didst prefer our salvation to thine own repose ! May thy nightly prayers procure a blessing for me every night, when I myself cannot pray as I would, but especially in the night of death !

FOURTH HOUR.

Thursday Evening, from 9 to 10 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

DURING this hour, our Lord Jesus lay, like a crushed worm, in the press of Divine wrath ; prayed repeatedly for the removal of the cup ; was sorrowful, and very heavy, even unto death, and, being in an agony, prayed more earnestly ; his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood ; and he was strengthened by an angel. All these events, which happened to Jesus, are most worthy of consideration. When Amasa lay wallowing in his blood, every one stood still to view the hero with regret, 2 Sam. xx. 12. Who should not then stand still here, where a greater than Amasa, even the Son of God, lieth in his blood ? Yea, who should not pause, and gaze with pity upon him ; the more so as he is thus dealt with by reason of the sins of each spectator ! The rod of Divine anger so severely struck this rock of salvation, that the waters of its precious sweat oozed mildly out. The winepress of the wrath of God so pressed this most noble grape, that its juice, its invaluable blood, flowed freely forth. All our life-time would not suffice adequately to contemplate the suffering of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane : the greater part would still remain for eternity, such depths does it contain ;—depths of the inflexible justice and holiness of God ;—depths of His inexorable wrath against sin ;—depths of the incomprehensible love of the Father, as well as of the Son, towards fallen man, and of the love and

obedience of Jesus to the Father ;—depths of the most astonishing humiliation, and indescribable sufferings. Oh ! if any person find his short and valuable time hang on his hands, let him with holy reverence, and fervent meditation, retire, in spirit, to the garden of Olives, and there awhile reflect on these depths, and the Holy Ghost will certainly remove his sense of tedium.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus Christ, thou spotless Lamb, here thou liest in pangs, and sweat, and blood. Who can comprehend the emotions of thy heart ? We see thee quake and tremble before the tempest of the wrath and fury of God. What a wondrous spectacle do I behold in thee in the garden of Gethsemane ! Thou, the source of all happiness, art overtaken by mortal anguish, by trembling, fear, and heaviest sorrow. Thou, the fountain of life, art in the agony of death. Thou, the source of all comfort, art panting for consolation. Thou, the most glorious majesty, before whom all powers and principalities, yea, all knees in heaven and on earth shall most reverentially bow, thyself bowest thy knees to the ground, and prostratest thyself before thy Father. Thou, the image of the invisible God, before whom all Seraphim and Cherubim cover their faces with holy adoration, layest thyself in the dust. Anon thou risest from the ground, anon fallest to the ground again. The burden of the wrath of God causeth thee an unusual sweat. Thou, the friend of souls, “sorrowful even unto death,” receivest strength and consolation from an angel, whose Creator thou art ; thou, the Lord of all, and over all, from a servant ; thou, the King of kings, from a subject ! Are not these all incomprehensible wonders of love, which far surpass the conceptions of angels and men, and which are worthy of the most humble meditation ? Here the wrath of the just Judge, the curse of the law, the fury of Satan, and the innumerable sins of all men, and

of me, assault thee, and the enormous burden lies so heavily upon thee, that it presseth thee down to the ground. The strong shoulders, which sustain heaven and earth, lie in the dust.

O Lamb, so sorely pained !
 My bleeding Bridegroom thou :
 How low hath love constrained
 Thy tortured head to bow !

Thy unspeakable sufferings, O Lord Jesus, must bear for me, and for all poor sinners, most precious fruits. Make me largely partaker of them, that thy sorrows and pains be not lost to me ! Lord Jesus, grant me faith, true faith, to recognize all that came upon thee here, as done and suffered in my stead, to receive it as my own, to appear with it before the Father, and by it to withstand the enemy ! Thy pangs and tremblings be the ground of my quietude of conscience, and peace with God ! Thy anguish be my consolation during life, in afflictions, and in death ! Thy filial petitions, and repeated prayers, and earnest entreaties, be the support whereupon I may lean in my prayers, and the ground of a childlike confidence in my supplications before God : for by thy prayers the cloud of sins is removed which hid the face of God from me : thou hast (in the words of a pious minister) forced an opening in the iron heaven by thy prayers, that my prayer may now find a free access to the throne of grace. May the struggles and agonies, which thy human nature endured in the prospect of the cup of God's indignation, be the means of bringing me through all conflict to a glorious victory ! May the unreserved submission of thy faultless human will to the will of the Father, produce in me a serene composure, and childlike delight in all thy divine ways and dispensations, how strange soever they may appear to my blind reason, and how contrary soever they may be to my corrupt inclinations ! May the condescension,

which thou, as a faithful shepherd, didst evince towards thy disciples, regarding their drowsiness during thy great conflict, be my consolation when I am weak and feeble ! May thy bloody sweat be a precious balm of life to me ! May those dear drops be more valuable than rubies in my esteem, and be carefully gathered, and sacredly treasured up for my soul's benefit ! O my beloved kinsman ! adorn my heart with these jewels, set them as an ornament on my forehead, and make them henceforth a sign betwixt me and thee, that thou art mine, and that I am thine ! On the day of my death, more properly designated my wedding-day, let those precious drops shine with such lustre upon me, that their brilliancy may conceal my deformity, so that thy Father may take pleasure in me, angels rejoice to carry home my soul, adorned with thy blood and mortal sweat, and devils be deterred from approaching me.

May that garden, which was a Gethsemane of grief to thee, be a Paradise of pleasure to me, where my soul may be refreshed ;—where I may sit under thy shadow, as the tree of life, with great delight, and partake of thy sweet fruits, which are not unto death, but unto endless life ! When I divert myself in the garden, then remind me of the ardent love, which thou didst display towards me in that garden, and of the pangs and sufferings thou enduredst for me there ! Sanctify and bless to me thus all garden labours and recreations ! May I thus reflect :

The toilsome gardener, who unwearied rears
His tender flowers with sweat and blood and tears ;—
What is his honoured name ? and where is he ?
Him, lo ! on Olive's lonely mount I see :
Not yet by Jewish rage and envy bound,
From bleeding pores he moistens all the ground.

O Lord Jesus, I find it laborious to nourish my plants with water only ; yet thou, having found nothing beside, in earth or heaven, which could have caused thy tender plants

to thrive, hast sprinkled them with thy own precious blood. Oh, incomparable and incomprehensible fidelity ! O heavenly gardener, how happy is the heart that has become thy care ! Oh, make my heart thy garden ! Dig out the rocks ; eradicate the thorns ; break up the soil with the implements of thy torture ; irrigate it with thy bloody sweat ; sow in it the good seed of thy word ; let the water and the blood which issued from thy side fructify it ; be thou thyself its Sun of righteousness ; and let the gentle breeze of thy Holy Spirit blow upon it, that it may bring forth precious fruits !

Grant me, O Lord Jesus, daily to contemplate what thou hast suffered for me in the garden of Gethsemane ; and may this hour, during which thou wast there, be every evening especially blessed to me ! At this time, draw off my thoughts and senses from all other objects ; though it be the usual hour to retire to rest, let my heart be wakeful towards thee. Let me by the power of thy conflict and victory, overcome all bodily fatigue and languor ! Let this hour be set apart to acknowledge, in genuine penitence, the multitude, enormity, and abominations of my sins, their unhappy consequences, and rightful punishment ! Teach me to weep over them with contrition of heart, even as all thy sacred body wept, as it were, on my account, bloody tears of painful repentance !

Grant that this hour may be sanctified to nurture in my soul a more unwavering faith ! When I reflect how weak and imperfect my repentance yet is, in every respect, then let me lay hold on thy perfect repentance, and present it to the Father, on my own account, by the exercise of child-like faith. Let not my daily and hourly consciousness of misery and deep corruption quench the feeble flame of my faith ; and particularly when I perceive, every evening, so many faults and sins by which I have been defiled during the day, enable me to adopt thy expression,—“ Father”—as

my own ! Grant that I may borrow from thy holy lips this believing, childlike ejaculation, repeating it after thee as I am able, and do thou corroborate it, and render it valid ! May I, as with a holy avarice, so act as if I would leave nothing of thy merits and sufferings, but take all as my own, and appropriate all to myself by faith ! Thy pangs and thy tremblings are mine ; thy prayers are mine ; thy agony is mine ; thy bloody sweat is mine ; with all that I witness in thee in the garden. . O my Physician and my Strength, allow me to lay my body and my soul beneath thy sacred knees and glorious face, that thy bloody sweat, heated, as it were, with love, may trickle on me, and warm my frigid heart ! Since thou hast not disdained to kneel on this accursed earth, do not refuse me this favour ! O Lord Jesus, kindle in me the fire of sincere love, that I may ever avoid that by which I might offend thee : take possession of my soul and senses, and grant that I may surrender myself, as thy bride, entirely to thee ! Amid such happy engagements of repentance, faith, and love, let me fall asleep, and when I awake, may my heart still be near to thee !

FIFTH HOUR.

Thursday Night, from 10 to 11 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

DURING this hour, our dear Redeemer was sought for by his blood-thirsty enemies, and betrayed by Judas with a kiss. With the greatest readiness he went to meet them, and when, in reply to the question, "Whom do ye seek?" they said, "Jesus of Nazareth," he presented himself, saying, "I am he." Then, through the deepest clouds of his humiliation, he emitted a beam of his divine omnipotence, and cast his enemies, with all their spears and

staves, to the ground. But this being the hour appointed by the Father for him to suffer and make atonement, he allowed them to rise up again, and on their repeating the inquiry, he made himself again known to them, yet procured, at the same time, a safe conduct for his disciples with these words, "If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." Then his enemies laid hold on him, as wolves upon a helpless sheep. Peter drew his sword, and cut off the ear of Malchus, which, however, Jesus, as the meek Lamb of God, restored with his healing touch, forbidding Peter to take revenge, and assuring him, that he could, himself, have requested of the Father more than twelve legions of angels, but this being his adversaries' appointed hour and the power of darkness, the disciples should not resist them in the accomplishment of their designs. Then the soldiers seized him, bound him, and led him away, but his disciples all forsook him and fled.

These things occurred to Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. Even here Jesus exercised his benevolence in the midst of ill-treatment. How appropriate is it, then, that we should daily devote an hour to devout meditation on this topic, and cherish hearty longings after the blessing that the faithful heart of our dear Saviour designed for us in the transactions of this hour! John xviii. 1—11.

PRAYER.

O Saviour, indefatigable in loving, labouring, and suffering! how ashamed have I reason to feel of my indolence and timidity, when contrasted with thy active love. But in this matter likewise do I take refuge in thy merits, with the confident assurance that thou wilt not refuse me an interest in them; because I stand in need of it, and seek it, and desire to obtain it through thy grace alone.

Strengthened by an angel, thou goest with renewed vigour and courage to take upon thyself fresh sufferings. Grant me the grace, which thou hast thus obtained for me.

Thy blood-thirsty enemies search for thee, and rest not, until they have found thee. They seek to discover Jesus of Nazareth, and to get him into their power. May I learn a lesson from them, and, in a good sense, imitate their conduct, in unweariedly seeking thee by faith, until I have found thee, and in the holy resolution to bind thee with the tie of faith and obedience, that thou mayest never depart from me. Thou hast submitted to be discovered by thine enemies : Judas, who knew thee well, first found thee, and he betrayed thee with a kiss. O my Saviour, how often does my false, Judas-like heart cause me fearful apprehension ! Alas ! by nature I have a heart like his. But, O Lord Jesus, grant that I may not retain it. Do thou radically change it, and take away from it all subtilty, and make it like thy true, faithful, and sincere heart ! Defer not, I beseech thee, to vouchsafe me this great blessing ! “ Search me, O God, and know my heart ; try me, and know my thoughts ; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” “ Create in me a clean heart,” that I may embrace thee, as a faithful bride, with sincere love, and be acknowledged thy beloved !

Friend and lover of my soul !
 Thee, my chosen, may I find ;
 Thee in friendship's fetters bind ;
 Now my weeping heart condole !
 Satisfy it with thy grace ;
 Make it thy abiding-place !
 May I gain thee, and retain thee ;
 Friend and lover of my soul !

And if my faith be too weak to find and recognize thee, then come and meet me, O Lord, with those mild words, “ I am he.” So shall I know my Shepherd's sweet voice. And if, having found thee, my faith is too weak to lay fast hold of thee, then thyself hold me, that we may never be separated.

For all the purposes, for which thou hast been given to us by God, do I stand in absolute need of thee, but especially to be my all-efficient Physician. Yea ! far more am I wounded than was the high priest's servant, who needed only to have his ear healed. I am sick in every part : my heart, my understanding, my will, my conscience, my memory, are all diseased : in short, I am sick in soul and body. Thou mayest, indeed, exhibit proofs of thy perfect healing skill in my case. " My wounds stink, and are corrupt because of my foolishness ;" they are incurable without thee ; there is no balm in Gilead besides thy blood, and no other physician by whom I can be cured ; but thou art a true proficient in healing. Thou art great in might, and strong in power, and unfailing in resources, and I know that thou art willing to help.

Heal me, O my soul's physician,
Wherein I am sick and sad ;
All the woes of my condition
By thy balm be now allayed !
Heal the evils Adam wrought,
Or which on myself I've brought ;
If thy blood be now applied,
My distress will all subside.

I confess, O Lord Jesus, that it is not thy fault, but my own, that I am still so sick and miserable. Grant, therefore, that I may allow thee to do with me as thou wilt, and not prove wilful and obstinate, like a perverse patient who is discontented with even the best advice and the most suitable medicine. Enable me to say sincerely,

Do as thou wilt with me and mine,
May I subserve but some design,
Thy sacred honours to advance,
Thy praise and glory to enhance !

Thou didst suffer thyself to be bound in my room, to obtain for me the perfect and happy deliverance I so need. Mayest thou, at length, attain this purpose also of thy

love. Truly thou wilt yet find many obstacles ; shackles on my heart, shackles of darkness and prejudice in the understanding, and shackles of perversity and obstinacy in the will. From these shackles, thou alone, O Lamb of God, who wast bound for me, canst set me free. Grant that thy bonds may excite in my mind a deep abhorrence of all inward bonds of sin : may the consciousness of any remaining restrictions be painful to me. But bring me, with the cords of love, into bondage to thyself. Pinion my heart to thine own, take my hand, and conduct me, as a little child, in the leading-strings of thy love, grace, and providence, and let me never walk alone ! May I account it my greatest honour and privilege to be thy servant ;— my true happiness, in all my steps, to follow thy guidance and direction. Now, O Lord Jesus, begin to melt or consume, with the fire of thy love, all chains, fetters, or manacles, that still confine me ! Lay me on the wood on the altar of thy love, and so consume me, that nought of self or self-will may continue to control me !

SIXTH HOUR.

Thursday Night, from 11 to 12 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

DURING this hour, our dear Redeemer was led away to Annas, but what happened to him there has not been recorded. Certainly nothing which afforded pleasure or honour to the Friend of our souls, but rather the contrary, for only sufferings now awaited him.

Thence was he dragged to Caiaphas, son-in-law to Annas, who was the high priest that year. Thither all the high priests, scribes, and elders had assembled to interrogate this High Priest about his disciples and his doctrine.

To all their questions, he, the Eternal Wisdom, gave them most suitable replies ; yet a bold, presumptuous servant durst strike the “image of the invisible God” on the cheek, and accuse him of having spoken improperly. The Saviour, to certify us that all he said was unimpeachably correct, defended the propriety of his words.

Whilst this was taking place, Peter, who had promised to go even unto death with his master, denied him, and the cock crew the first time. All these sufferings, which our Mediator endured, are most worthy of our observation. Oh, how many blessings, favours, and benedictions did he procure for us ! John xviii. 12—24.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus, my most precious surety, I supplicate thy forgiveness for all those sins which thou didst atone for during this late hour of the night, and entreat thee to grant me the fruits of thy voluntary sufferings. Whensoever I am still awake at this late hour, grant me to follow thee in spirit from the garden to the city of Jerusalem, and into the high priest’s palace, but not at a distance, like Peter, who was not then called to be near thee, since thou, knowing the danger to which he would be exposed, hadst intimated to him that, whither thou wast going, he could not at this time follow thee. But, O my Redeemer, may I not endeavour, in the Spirit and by faith, to press through all the tumult of thy enemies, and to approach as near to thee as possible, to receive immediately from thee that blessing which thou hast obtained for me, and to learn from thy example a deportment full of wisdom and meekness ?

When the high priest interrogated thee, the Eternal and Heavenly High Priest, concerning thy disciples and thy doctrine, thou didst not hold thy peace, but gavest him an appropriate answer. O my Saviour, teach me also to speak thus wisely and reasonably, and may my words and

acts be ever dictated by thy word and will, that I may speak as fearlessly as thou didst ! How irreproachable were thy words ; for which, notwithstanding, thou receiv-
edst a severe blow from a vassal of Satan ! Thus hast thou borne, in my stead, that shame and confusion of face, which I must inevitably feel in the day of judgment, if examined respecting my words and deeds, and left to stand alone without thee to support and justify me. But in this particular, too, thou hast stood in my room, taken upon thyself that scorn and shame, which would otherwise have been my lot, and received the stroke which I have deserved by unnumbered useless and unwise speeches. Therefore, now shall I escape, for thy sake, being put to shame in judgment. 'Thousand thanks be to thee for that opprobrium, which thou didst allow to be heaped upon thee ! Should I not have slept, or should I be awakened out of sleep, during this hour of the night, oh, arouse me to heartfelt thanksgivings for thy love and faithfulness to my interests.

Although thou didst speak and act aright, thy foes, who would have wished thee to transgress, smote thee for not doing so : whereas I, who have done evil, and spoken amiss, need not to blush before thee, but shall be declared innocent, and my character be regarded as faultless, in thy presence. Oh, may this reflection be, during the night, as a sweet pasture, upon which my soul may feed by faith !

Thy sufferings, O my Saviour, came not singly, even as my sins are not committed singly. For while yet the above sufferings lay upon thee, thy beloved disciple, Peter, by denying thee, inflicted an additional painful wound upon thy faithful heart, the more grievous from this circumstance, that thou hadst earnestly warned him of his peril, and exhorted him to watch and to pray. Oh ! how often have I caused thee similar grief ! How prone is my heart to be ashamed of thee, and how backward to confess thee

before men, even when no danger is connected with it ! May it henceforth be my greatest pleasure, and may I deem it my highest honour, to confess thee as my all in all, both in word and deed, even though my earthly honour and my mortal life should be at stake !

SEVENTH HOUR.

Friday Morning, from 12 to 1 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

It was now midnight. During this hour the Lord Jesus was further twice denied by Peter ; upon which, when the Lord Jesus cast on him a moving and affecting look, his heart was melted with true and sincere repentance. How wicked and perfidious are our hearts ! How pure and faithful is the heart of Jesus ! During the hour in which Peter denied him, various accusations were brought against the spotless Lamb of God by false witnesses : but he held his peace, especially on this account that their witness did not agree. But if his lips were silent, he spoke the more emphatically with his eyes in his look towards Peter, which conveyed a most powerful expostulation. Lastly, the high priest himself rose and demanded of the Lamb of God, whether he had not any reply to make to so many accusations. But not even on this demand did he break his silence. Matt. xxvi. 69—75. Mark xiv. 55—72.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus, what a kind-hearted Saviour art thou ! Thy disciple Peter's fidelity is overcome a second and a third time : but thou art a rock for ever !

Oh, how distressing must Peter's conduct have been to thee ! How much must my disobedience, also, have pierced thy heart with grief ! I cannot determine how

nearly I resemble Peter, never having been in the same circumstances of danger ; but I have too often been ashamed of thee in company, and forborne to make mention of thy name, from the fear of attracting notice. May thy perseverance in the path of obedience, even unto the most shameful death, be my refuge, and an atonement for my unfaithfulness ! Likewise grant me grace to be faithful unto thee, even unto death, and may it be my greatest pleasure to give many evidences of my fidelity. And that I may be effectually converted from all sin and folly, oh, watch over me with the same care thou didst exhibit towards Peter ! But enable me also, myself, to watch over my faithless heart, and avoid even the temptation to sin ; because I perceive by the example of Peter, and have myself experienced, that transgressors seldom stop at a single act of disobedience, but sink gradually deeper and deeper into sin.

If I awake at midnight, oh, remind me powerfully of all these occurrences for a blessing to my soul, and bestow on me, as on Peter, a glance of thy mercy ! At midnight a deep stillness prevails. Meek Lamb, how suitable is such an hour to meditate on thy silence amidst malignant accusations, and the duty of imitating thy deportment.

Yet more tranquil, yet more still,
Tranquil Lamb, oh, may I be ;—
E're composed 'midst good or ill ;—
Still in calmness following thee !

When my conscience or the law of God accuses me, I must necessarily remain speechless, on account of my guilt. But, O dearest Lord, let thy silence speak for me ! Let thy holy silence atone for all my unprofitable words ! Let thy silence be as a lock to close my forward and talkative lips ! As, while the high priest was addressing thee, thou listenedst to him in meek silence, so, O my Eternal High Priest, when thou speakest to me, by thy

word or Spirit, may I be silent and attentive. Yea, give me a quiet and heedful ear to listen to thy still, soft voice, and grant me also an obedient heart ! Lord Jesus, it may possibly happen that at midnight the call may come to me, " Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go thou forth to meet him." Grant me grace, that I may be found watching, adorned with the holy merits of thy sufferings, and provided with the oil of faith, so as, through thy merits, to enter with thee into the marriage-supper ! Amen.

EIGHTH HOUR.

Friday Morning, from 1 to 2 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

It was now Friday ; a Friday* indeed ; a day of freedom, and therefore a most joyous day. It was a joyful day to Jesus, for he " rejoiced as a strong man to run his race," although it was beset with thorns. For the Friend of our souls this was as a wedding-day, during which he would purchase, and betroth to himself his elect bride. For this reason it was a day of delight to his heart, and he thought even less of the painful toil, which he had to undergo, night and day, for his beloved, than Jacob of his fourteen years' service for Rachel : nay, for his bride, our Lord spent nearly thirty-four years in such a service as required the entire sacrifice of himself. And for us, too, it is a joyful day, for on this day were we redeemed and liberated from the power and dominion of all our enemies, and have thus become truly free. The Lord Jesus obtained for us on this day the unspeakable blessing of eternal salvation. Though he maintained his silence during the preceding hour, he now, upon the question of the high priest, whether he were the Christ, the

* The name of the day, in German, appears to denote " free-day."

Son of God, made a glorious confession. But this truth it was needful openly to declare. On hearing it, the high priest rent his clothes, and accused him of blasphemy, and he was pronounced to be worthy of death by the whole assembly. Then the most ignominious and painful treatment was experienced by our Surety. It is not improbable that even some members of the Sanhedrim themselves spat in the face of Him, who was "fairer than the children of men;" since we read that "some began to spit on him," and that "the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him, and when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against him." Luke xxii. 63—65. Amidst these distressful circumstances commenced the great day of our deliverance and redemption. Matthew xxvi. 63—68.

PRAYER.

O my Redeemer, whom I never can love as I ought, thou beginnest this day with sufferings. May I now begin all my days with praises and thanksgivings! Thou art unwearied in suffering; may I be never weary of meditating on thy sufferings, and of appropriating by faith all the precious fruits obtained through them for me!

O thou faithful Witness, thou confessest without hesitation, that thou art "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." I praise and adore thee for this all-important confession. Of what use would it be to me to know all thy acts and sufferings, if I did not know certainly that thou art the Son of God, the promised Messiah, and the Saviour of the world? That only can impart weight to thy sufferings and obedience, to thy blood-shedding and death, and cause them to be accepted with God. Though thou knewest well the inevitable result of thy confession, thou didst not shrink from making it, and encountering the conse-

quences. Oh, how great love ! Thou regardest not thine own feelings, when the honour of thy Father, and the salvation of men is at stake. Open thou also my mouth to speak whatever may promote the glory of God, and the eternal well-being of my neighbour. Teach me when to be silent, and when to speak ! And if only myself and my own reputation be concerned, help me to endure the wrong, and to forgive my calumniator.

Although all thou didst and enduredst was for the glory of the Father, yet wast thou accused of blasphemy. But this came upon thee only through thy becoming my substitute. I am the blasphemers, O Lord Jesus, I it was, who deserved to endure the treatment, under which thou sufferedst, I deserve to have been spit upon, smitten, and condemned to death : but thou didst interpose thy face to receive the disgraceful spittle, and the cruel blows, that my face may shine with glory evermore. Thou wast mocked and reviled, that I may be honoured, as thy bride, by thy Father and the holy angels. Thou didst submit to be blindfolded, O Lord Jesus, but thy bride can recognize thee even under this disguise : she looks through the veil of thy humiliation, and here she discovers that glory, which attracts her eye and heart, and fixes them on thee. Though sinners mock thy prophetic office, she knows well that thou art the true Prophet, the Amen, and the faithful Witness. Thy people can read the confirmation of this fact upon thy face, even when defiled with spittle, for every circumstance hadst thou previously predicted, and the fulfilment of the prediction strengthens their faith.

When derided most severely,
 Then to me art thou most fair ;
 Thy disgrace hath purchased dearly
 Honours I may freely share :
 Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
 Dearest Jesus, paid to thee.

NINTH HOUR.

Friday Morning, from 2 to 3 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

DURING this hour, it appears that the priests, scribes, and elders retired to their respective homes. They were for the present fatigued with their exertions, and concluding that they had well secured the person of Jesus, they went home to rest awhile, that they might return with new vigour to resume their business from the stage at which they had left it. This was truly to spend their strength in sin, and to devote the night, and sacrifice the night's repose to the service of Satan. Alas! how many imitators have these persons, even in the present day! Our indefatigable Redeemer did not grow weary of loving and suffering. Although his body, worn out by his agony in the garden, his bloody sweat, and his intense sorrow, required rest, yet the ardour of his love rendered him so strong and vigilant, that he thought not of rest, until he could honourably cease from his toils, as being fully accomplished. It was not now the time for him to rest, but to make reconciliation between God and man, to save sinners, and to overcome his adversaries. These were matters of such vast importance as to forbid sleep to his watchful eyes. The guard, all this while, held him fast, that he might not escape. Luke xxii. 63.

PRAYER.

How willingly, my dearest Redeemer, didst thou devote this whole night, and abstain from thy needful rest, on my account, thus atoning for my delicateness, which often renders me excessively fond of repose, and causes me to hasten to bed, before I have well reviewed the sins of the day, and betaken myself to thy cleansing blood. Unbounded thanks be paid to thee for thy love! May thy love be a magnet, which, even in this hour, may attract

my thoughts, O Lord Jesus, to thee :—a fire, that may kindle in me a flame of true love in return for thine. O Lord Jesus, how much of my strength have I too spent in the service of Satan ! How often therefore has my rest become a sin to me ! May thy meritorious sufferings at this early hour cover all my transgressions ! Thou hast obtained grace for me, by the aid of which I may now offer up myself, both soul and body, entirely to thy service and honour. Teach me to improve this precious gift, that I may live to serve thee alone !

Thou permittedst thine enemies to bind thee ; yet, O Lord Jesus, that which in reality confined thee was thy great love, which was stronger than death. How easily mightest thou have prostrated all thine enemies in the dust before thee, as in the garden, by but a single word ! But no ! thou remainest in their hands, and thou remainest voluntarily, and that to suffer. If thou hadst then withdrawn thyself, O compassionate Friend, then long ago my doom would have been unalterably fixed, and I should have been consigned to the bottomless pit. Glory, praise, and honour be to thee ! How willing wast thou, O Lord Jesus, that they should hold thee ! O teach me also to lay hold of thee by faith and in love, yea, even in the night-time. May I also, like the men that then had thee in custody, sometimes forbear to sleep, so that, waking, I may apprehend thy love and favour ! Should I lose all earthly comforts, if thou only remain to me, it is enough. If thou art but my portion, then require I nought besides, either in heaven or on earth, and though even my heart and my flesh should fail, thou art my God, “ the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.” Let me hide thee deeply in the affections of my heart, that thou mayest abide in me, and I in thee ; and should I fear that I have lost thee, then let me not rest, until I possess thee again. And shouldst thou, in thy wise dealings and dispensations

appear to withdraw thyself from me, then enable me, with tears, and entreaties, and wrestlings, to say, "Lord, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Yea, O Lord Jesus, come to me, and dwell with me, and in me! O thou my All-in-all, abide with me, for my day is declining, and the evening of my life draweth on. How much do I stand in need of thee! What can I do without thee, either amidst the activities of life, or in the sufferings of affliction and death?

My Saviour, O where but with thee can I dwell?
 Without thee, a prey to the terrors of hell:
 In the presence of God what can strengthen my heart,
 But possessing in thy love a bliss-giving part?
 My hope, then, is this, that thou wilt not evade
 The hand of my faith, which would cling to thine aid;
 Seeing I am thine own, to love whom thou art tied
 By the pledge which thy sufferings and blood have supplied.

TENTH HOUR.

Friday Morning, from 3 to 4 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

DURING this hour, the Lord Jesus was amongst the Roman soldiers, as a lamb amongst wolves. Moreover, in this hour, our dear Saviour was, probably, spit upon, smitten, and reviled, and endured affliction and sorrow of heart. The evangelists do not mention all the hellish ignominy, which Satan, during this hour, heaped upon Jesus, out of the stores of his dark kingdom. One can easily imagine what insults these untameable soldiers, who conceived they had a criminal before them, whom they could never torment enough, may have invented, partly for sport, and partly from hatred: and the more so, as no person was present, for whose authority they entertained the least respect. No doubt they endeavoured to outvie each other in wicked and wanton cruelty. The gentle Lamb of God

endured all with patience, meekness, and love, and, far from being daunted, was prepared for still severer sufferings. Amidst all the billows of anguish thus beating upon him, he had his mind intently fixed upon his Father, and only His will, and the salvation of poor sinners in view.

PRAYER.

O my Saviour, what a distressful hour must this have been to thee ! Thou mightst have continued for ever amidst the praises and adoration of the holy angels, of all the cherubim and seraphim, yea, even in the bosom of the Father, yet thou humbledst thyself so far as to surrender thyself altogether into the hands of the agents of Satan, and to their tormenting and satanic wantonness. With what sufferings and griefs of thy kind heart, secret intercourse with thy Father, and intercessory petitions for sinners, that the merits of even these sufferings might be bestowed upon them, mayest thou have passed this hour ! How little have I praised and glorified thee during this hour, which I am usually spending in slumber and bodily repose ! But thou, O my faithful Saviour, art awake, and engaged in cancelling the hand-writing, by which I was condemned. O may I make good, in my yet remaining days, what I have hitherto neglected ! But, fully to accomplish this, nothing less than a sinless eternity can suffice. My dear Saviour ! should I awake during this hour, let nothing else occupy my thoughts but thy love in enduring such sufferings for me ! For these, allow me to offer up to thee my repeated humble praises. But should I often be asleep during this hour, yet I know that thou hast by thy nocturnal sufferings and indefatigable watchings sanctified my rest too. Though my eyes be closed, may my heart be ever with thee ! Yea, O Lord Jesus, in consideration of the covenant, in which I have engaged myself to thee, take, I pray thee, every pulse for a humble and hearty thanksgiving, and every beat of my heart

as a knock at the door of thine for the enjoyment of the fruits of thy merits. Grant that, even asleep, I may be an entire sacrifice well-pleasing to thee.

Like the mother of Zebedee's children, (Matt. xx. 20,) I have yet one special request to make from thee, but, O my bountiful Saviour, I ask it in submission to thy will. The knowledge I have of my sins being so imperfect, that I perceive scarcely the thousandth part of my transgressions and corruptions, how many must there be which are concealed from me. I entreat thee, therefore, to offer up those of thy sufferings which are unknown to me before thy Father, as an atonement for those sins of mine, which are concealed from me, that I may be delivered from uneasiness of conscience on their account, and have free access to the throne of grace through the unknown accumulations of thy merits!

ELEVENTH HOUR.

Friday Morning, from 4 to 5 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

Now the high priests, scribes, and elders again met together, after having rested but a short time. Hatred of Jesus prevented their quiet repose, else they would longer have indulged in it. How perverse is man's disposition! In doing good he is slow and indolent; but in doing evil, he is vigilant and active. This, Jesus had to experience to his sorrow, and at the same time to atone for. Their wicked design having once more brought them together, with the fierceness of wolves, they arraigned the Lamb of God before their council, and interrogated him again, whether he were the Christ, the Son of God; whereupon he confessed openly that he was so, showing them, at the same time, their wickedness. It was just this that they wished, because they thought they had now sufficient rea-

son to condemn him to death, which they immediately proceeded to do. This was the second time that Jesus had been condemned to death, and in the garden he had been in the agony of death. Thus, because we so often sin, and the law and our conscience pronounce sentence of death upon us, therefore had our substitute to experience such severity of reiterated suffering. Luke xxii. 66—71.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus, in thy last sufferings, thou hadst not the relief of a pleasant morning, or an easy day, after a night of pain and watching. Thou often grantest thy believing people this comfortable change, that after a tedious night of suffering, they may enjoy a day of quietude and repose ; for thou, our High Priest, who wast “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,” canst “be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” and knowest well how distressing it is to suffer thus without intermission. Thou hadst the most painful night, that ever was, or ever shall be spent, but now what day is to succeed it? A day of suffering,—a day of torment and anguish,—a day of gloom and darkness,—a day of bloodshedding and death. Hadst thou determined that a day of relief should succeed a night of agony,—hadst thou been weary of enduring such accumulated woes,—hadst thou not persevered, as a faithful friend and surety,—then we wretched, sinful men must have spent our days in terror, anguish, and despair, and death would have seized us as sheep destined for the slaughter. Oh, had I a thousand tongues, they all should be employed to render thee unceasing praise, adoration, and thanksgiving for thy persevering fidelity. Thou hast now changed all our days into good days, and days of blessing, so that we can rejoice in them, and be glad in thy salvation. O let us not, through the indulgence of sin, that hideous evil, make them days of anguish !

Again thou avowest thyself to be the Son of God. May thy constancy in confession atone for all my fickleness ! As thou didst candidly confess what thou art, even in the presence of thine enemies, who, like spiders, would only suck poison out of the fair flower of thy confession, so grant me also, after thy example, unhesitatingly to confess my real condition. I feel that I have great need to beseech thee for this grace, because of the exceeding deceitfulness of my heart. When David was induced to "keep silence," his "bones waxed old" with grief and fear. May I be instructed by the experience of others, especially since I have no reason to apprehend that those painful results will follow my confession, which succeeded to thine : on the contrary, the more open-hearted I am towards thee, my most faithful Friend, the more assistance, grace, and happiness may I expect from thee. I confess, therefore, to thee, in sincerity, what I am ;—a poor sinner, by nature thoroughly corrupt, having not a spark of goodness in me, nor a drop of blood untainted by sin, who from my very birth inherited a spirit of enmity against thee, and have, by the commission of innumerable sins, contracted an immense debt, and a thousand times deserved the condemnation of hell, and therefore lie in a state of misery, out of which no creature in heaven or on earth can rescue me,—yea, I am, in myself, the greatest, vilest, most miserable sinner, requiring the skill of a physician, no less than Almighty, to heal me, even of Thee, O Lord Jesus, my Deliverer, Redcemer, and Saviour ; of Thee, thou Son of God, the Messiah, possessing without measure the Spirit of grace and power.

Yea, so guilty am I, O Lord, that no one can discharge my immense debt for me but thou alone. My soul is covered with hellish black stains of sin, which I can no more wash away than an Ethiopian can change his skin, or a leopard erase his spots. Nothing but thy divine

blood, that cleansing fountain, can make me white as snow. Yea, Lord, I own my state before thee as it is; as thy holy eyes, like flames of fire, will easily discover it to be; and as it long ago would have become, hadst thou withdrawn thy aid from me, and left me to myself and my enemies. This, O my Deliverer, is my confession concerning myself. If I did not know the confession thou hast made, I should despair of relief from my misery, and be lost for ever. But being assured from thy word, nay, from thine own holy mouth, that thou art Christ, my anointed High Priest, Prophet, and King, yea, the Son of God, whose sufferings and merits are of infinite value to me, I dare not despond, but rather sing,

I grateful own my debt to Christ,
But disavow all claims besides :
On Jesus' blood and sacrifice
My faith's foundation firm abides.

As, my Saviour, thou hast begun to assist me, to save me, to heal me, to wash me, in a word, to accomplish in my favour all the functions of thy offices, I trust in thee, as a good master-builder not to abandon thy work, but with thine own hands to bring it to perfection, for thine own honour, and my blessedness. Yea, O Lord Jesus, if I view myself in thee, then am I already completely righteous, pure, holy, and happy. Since thou hast been condemned to death, I have, in and through thee, everlasting life. Hallelujah.

TWELFTH HOUR.

Friday Morning, from 5 to 6 o'clock.

MEDITATION.

AT this time the whole council arose simultaneously, and, either binding Jesus afresh, or fastening his bonds

more tightly than before, led him to Pontius Pilate. It was very early in the morning when this was done. When Judas perceived that Jesus would surely be put to death, he returned the money he had received for betraying him, asserted the innocence of Jesus, and hanged himself. The present was another heavy hour for the suffering Lamb. His prophecy, that he should be delivered to the Gentiles, was also now fulfilled. But oh, what sorrow must his loving heart have felt during this hour, to have lost one of his disciples, towards whom he had evinced so much fidelity! Thus new sufferings were continually added to those which oppressed the spirit of our Saviour. Every hour discloses new depths of his grief, and also new heights of his love. Matthew xxvii. 1—5.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus, thou most compassionate Friend of sinners! thou sufferedst late in the evening; let me, therefore, to a late hour meditate upon thy sufferings. Thou sufferedst even during the night; during the night, therefore, may thy passion not be absent from my mind. Early in the morning thou art still suffering; grant that my heart may be early prepared to contemplate thy love, and to praise thee. Thine enemies fasten thy bonds more tightly than before: O may I attach thee more and more closely to myself with the bonds of faith and love! I kiss, in the spirit, thy blessed bounden hands, which formed me so wonderfully in my mother's womb, and have sustained me all my life with more than a mother's care; and I confidently trust in Thee, that they shall not forsake me, but bring me at length to that happy state, which is the consummation of my hopes and wishes. I kiss the marks and wounds, which the cruel cords produced on thy flesh. O do thou graciously secure to me that blessing, which thy love had in view, when wearing those bonds for me!

Thou art the true hind of the morning, mentioned in the title of the xxii. Psalm, bounding as it were from one place of suffering to another : sanctify hereby all my walks and journeys, which I take either in affliction or in health, and grant that I may never neglect to review in thought those places, where thou didst manifest thy love to me, even unto death. Thou wast arraigned before a heathen judge, but oh, what a mercy that my judge is at the same time my brother and my bridegroom ! By him, I certainly shall not be condemned to death. Judas, who before was amongst thy disciples, despairing of thy pardoning grace, put an end to his own life. Such is the fruit of sin. At first, it appears sweet, but afterwards, when it is finished, it becomes to the poor soul like gall and poison. Such is Satan's method. Before sin is committed, he endeavours to make light of it, but afterwards he represents it like the mountains, and persuades the affrighted conscience that it is larger than the grace of God. Grant that I may see in the example of Judas the abominable nature, and awful consequences of sin, and be so wise as to avoid it.

How speedily may we be entangled in sin's fatal net, but how difficult afterwards to escape from it ! Imbue me, O Lord Jesus, with a holy hatred against all sin, especially the sin of covetousness, which is a root of all evil, and against all falsehood and secret malice. Judas, before hanging himself, restored the money he had received ; for unjust gain allows no rest to the tormented conscience.

But, O my invaluable Saviour, how little art thou esteemed, although thou art the chiefest of all treasures ! Thy disciple sells thee for thirty pieces of silver. The world resigns thee for a vile lust of sin. But oh, what an immense favour that, though thy Father knows thy value as none besides can know it, and though poor sinners are

unable to render an equivalent for even a single drop of thy blood, yet he gives thee freely, and without price, to all that desire thee! Oh what indescribable shame, were I not to receive thee with earnest desire from the hands of thy Father, as the pledge of my eternal salvation! Grant that I may appreciate thee most highly, and esteem all things as loss and dross in comparison with the inestimable blessedness of knowing thee.

For the thirty pieces of silver a field was bought, which was, therefore, called "the field of blood." Behold, O Lord Jesus, my heart is also, in this sense, a field of blood, yea, until this day thy field of blood: for it hath been purchased, and is still watered and fertilized by thy blood. Do thou, my Lord and Master, thyself cultivate it, that it may bear fruit to thee! I was to be disposed of, but none would purchase me, on account of my barrenness, and the rank tares and thorns and thistles, which I bore. But thou, in pity to me, didst give ten thousand times my value for me, merely that I might be reclaimed from my desert condition. May thy infinite grace thus shown towards me forbid my ever indulging despair, and increase my assurance and confidence in thee! Enable me, O my Saviour, in this morning hour, to consider that thou art my Lord and Proprietor, and that my heart is thy field, purchased with thy blood, so that I may every morning devote it anew to thee, to be, to all eternity, thine unalienable inheritance!

THIRTEENTH HOUR.

Friday, from 6 to 7, A. M.

MEDITATION.

THIS was the hour of accusation. The accuser of the brethren stood up in the persons of his emissaries to lodge complaints against Jesus, the first-born amongst all the

brethren. The Most Holy was aligned as a criminal, against whom a variety of heinous charges were preferred. Jesus held his peace, because he stood in the stead of the actual criminals. But when questioned by Pilate, as to the truth of the charge, that he claimed to be a King, he answered openly, that he was one, and that for this he was born, and had come into the world, that he might bear witness to the truth; so giving proof that his kingdom is not of this world. On this, Pilate asserted the innocence of Jesus before all his accusers. But when they renewed the accusations, Jesus, the Eternal Wisdom, deemed it expedient not to speak, nor to defend himself. Nor could he well do so, because whatever crimes they laid to his charge, we had been guilty of, and he stood as our substitute before his judge. Therefore he persevered in remaining speechless, so that Pilate was even astonished. Heaven, earth, and hell concurred to seek his death. Matthew xxvii. 11—14. John xviii. 33—37.

PRAYER.

Thanks be to thee, O Lord Jesus, for that great love, which induced thee to stand in my room at the bar of judgment,—that love, which caused thee to hold thy peace, when thou wast accused of those evils, which I and my fellow-sinners had committed, and prompted thee to speak again, when thou hadst to make a glorious declaration of thy nature and office, the explicit avowal of which was of the utmost importance to mankind. Thou submittedst to be called a malefactor, though thou art in truth the greatest of all benefactors. Malefactor is my title, not thine; but thou hast taken it from me, and attached it to thyself, and, with the title, thou hast taken also the blame of my evil doings, and given me in exchange a new name, and the imputation of thy blameless innocence.

Lord of Hosts, how shall I raise,
Anthems suited to thy praise?

Send me power from above,
 Through thy Spirit, God of Love !
 Though my tongue is far too weak,
 All thy grace and love to speak ;
 Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
 Dearest Jesus, paid to thee.

When it shall be said to some on the great day of judgment, " I never knew you ; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity ;" I am assured that it will not be said to me ; because I am no more so designated, but thou knowest me by the new name, which thou hast given me. Grant that my soul may rejoice in this consideration, particularly during this hour, and praise thee for thine inexpressible kindness, and for thy glorious assertion of thy regal dignity. Thou art Monarch of heaven and earth, be thou likewise the sovereign of my heart. Thou art the King eternal and immortal, therefore is thy kingdom also eternal and imperishable. Make me thy faithful subject, that I may submit to thy sway, and serve thee in perfect righteousness and holiness. Thou saidst that thou wast born, and camest into the world to give witness unto the truth, and that every one that is of the truth heareth thy voice. O thou Eternal Truth, well mayest thou testify of the truth, for thou hast come forth from the Father, full of grace and truth, and grace and truth have been poured into thy lips. Oh what solid comfort does this afford me, that all which thou sayest and doest is truth indeed, and nothing is mere outward appearance. O thou true Saviour, renew in me also a right spirit, and form in me a sincere mind, that I may love the truth, and hate falsehood ; and grant that a true sign may be found in me, from which I may satisfactorily conclude that I am of the truth, namely, this, that I hear thy voice. Help me to be truly pious and free from all hypocrisy, that my whole conversation may be sincere in thy sight.

In the hour preceding this, Judas made an open declaration of thine innocence ; now even Pilate thy judge

does the same. It was necessary that thine innocence should be thus vindicated, that we might know that thou wast suffering, not for thine own sins, but for the sins of others. Thanks be to God, that thou wast appointed to pay the debt, which thou hadst not incurred. But that thou shouldst be declared innocent was what Satan could not bear. Although he well knew that thou wast innocent, he did his utmost to make thee appear guilty, that he might rob us of all our consolation. For this reason, he stirred up his agents to reiterate their calumniations. But, O Jesus, thou remainedst silent, like a lamb that is dumb before its shearers. Grant that I may imitate thee in this respect, and when the adversary upbraids me with my sins, let me betake me, in holy silence, to the refuge of thine innocence, and refrain from disputing with my accuser. O my Saviour, teach me this secret, to be calm under every suffering, that I may not offend by making either excuses or complaints. Be thou in this respect also my example!

Pilate marvelled at thy silence; but how much more would this heathen have been astonished, had he known the deep secret of thy holy silence! Like the world, however, he paid no attention to this. If any thing extraordinary occur in the kingdom of nature or of grace, the world wonders, and there they end. Let it not be thus with me, but grant me, through the merits of thy sufferings, an attentive and obedient heart, that the purpose of thy grace may be fulfilled in me!

FOURTEENTH HOUR.

Friday, from 7 to 8, A. M.

MEDITATION.

THIS was the hour during which Jesus, our dearest Benefactor, was led away to King Herod, who was grati-

fied at seeing him, not because he had a laudable desire to obtain salvation through him, but only from a desire to witness signs and wonders wrought by him. But as our all-wise Saviour deemed it not right to comply with his wishes, Herod and his courtiers despised, mocked, and laughed at him, and, to make him the more ridiculous, arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, the high priests and scribes, the mean while, accusing him vehemently. Our Redeemer here also behaved himself like a lamb, neither answering the questions put to him, nor replying to the numerous accusations brought against him. How much did our faithful Jesus atone for even during this hour, to the end that poor sinners may be freed from guilt and condemnation. Luke xxiii. 6—11.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus, our suffering Benefactor, thousand thanks be to thee for all the sufferings and merits of this hour, during which thou didst well accomplish the part assigned thee by thy Father, towards effecting our salvation, for which through all eternity praise and honour shall be ascribed to thee. Grant that I may partake richly of all the blessings obtained for me during this hour! Draw my heart and thoughts early in the morning to the contemplation of thy great love and indefatigable fidelity in the work of our salvation. May I learn wisdom, meekness, patience, and calmness from thy holy example, and arm myself for the whole day with thy mind! May thy being dragged from one tribunal to another be the ground of my deliverance from the power of darkness! May thy being arraigned in judgment be a pledge to me that I shall not be ashamed at the last judgment! May thy meekness be an atonement for my revengeful and intolerant temper! May thy innocence be a robe to conceal my guiltiness! Whenever I put on my clothes, may I remember the gorgeous robe, with which thou wast clothed

in derision, in the morning hour at or near which I am usually dressing myself, and may the humble, thankful reflection sanctify to me my daily clothing of my person. And, in my dying hour,

“ Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty be, my glorious dress ! ”

Lord Jesus, scorn and derision, similar to what was poured on thee in that hour, is directed against thee daily, though thou art sitting on the throne of thy glory. O fill my heart with holy reverence before thy sacred majesty, that I may never dishonour thee ! May thy Holy Spirit enlarge my soul's conviction of thine inexpressible worth, that I may esteem and appreciate thee beyond all things, and feel it to be my greatest honour to serve thee, and to worship at thy feet. Nor let me offend thee in thy members, though despised by the world, but honour thine image in them, and ever prefer them in honour above myself. If thou wast made an object of derision by the world, let me much more hold the foolish wisdom and vile treasures of the world in contempt. Smile upon me, O my Friend, let the light of thy loving, gracious countenance shine upon me in life, in suffering, and in death ! O my Refuge in time of need, at that time leave me not to my fears, but strengthen me by an assurance of thy presence and aid, that, even in death, I may smilingly behold thee, and condemn its most fearful terrors ! This I entreat through the merits of thy sufferings.

FIFTEENTH HOUR.

Friday, from 8 to 9, A. M.

MEDITATION.

OUR dear Redeemer was now conducted back to Pilate, who made many efforts to convince the high priests and rulers of the people of the innocence of Jesus, that he

might release him ; with which end in view he also gave them their choice between Jesus and Barabbas, to induce them to consent to Jesus' release. But the deluded people were so prejudiced against the innocent Saviour, that they would hear of nothing less than his death, and preferred that Barabbas the murderer should be set at liberty, rather than Christ. With one accord they cry, " Away with him," and entreat that Barabbas may be released. And when Pilate asked what he should do with Jesus, of whom it was said that he was the Christ, the whole multitude exclaimed, " Crucify him, crucify him," and so great a tumult did they make that the poor gentile, Pilate, delivered Jesus to their will. Well might a certain writer remark, " 'This is a strange contention ; the accusers averring that the prisoner is guilty, while the judge and the judge's wife declare him innocent ; nor less strange the result, that the prisoner should be scourged, and delivered over to death !' " Matt. xxvii. 15—23. Mark xv. 6—15. Luke xxiii. 13—25.

PRAYER.

O my full and most loving substitute ! here I clearly discern thee standing in my room. None of all thy accusers can with truth affix any blame to thy character ; again and again thy innocence is proved and proclaimed ; and yet thou continuest to suffer. The murderer is released, and thou remainest under treatment as a criminal. The murderer, the rebel, the criminal, deserving death, distinguished above others for notorious transgressions,—(as is, in the gospel, said of Barabbas) is a true representation of me. For my rescue thou hast voluntarily taken upon thyself, O Lord Jesus, grief and pain ; thousand thanks and praises to thy name ! Now I need not apprehend being left destitute in any need, even in death and judgment, for thou wilt help me in every necessity, and deliver me out of every difficulty, if only I lay hold

of thee by true faith. Yea, thou givest us full assurance that he who "heareth thy words, shall not come into condemnation." So great a blessing have these thy sufferings procured for me. (John v. 24.)

But though thou art such a precious Saviour, of so inestimable worth, how few have any desire to possess thee ! The high priests, scribes, and people are glad to see thee cut off from the land of the living, and clamorously and earnestly call for thy execution. Pilate, too, is at a loss how to dispose of thee, and asks the people, "What shall I do then with Jesus?" But, O my Redeemer, to me thou art unspeakably valuable, the choicest gift of heaven ; come, oh come to me. I need thee for my "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," yea, for every office and purpose to which thou hast been appointed by thy Father.

Pilate surrenders thee to the mercy of the rabble ; the Father also delivers thee up to me. O let me not deal with thee according to my corrupt carnal will, because this is at enmity with thee, and would also crucify thee, rather than allow thee to be a King ; but may I rather deal with thee according to the will implanted in me by thy good Spirit ; which will do thou, more and more, strengthen, purify, and sanctify ! Then shall I receive and use thee aright, as my Prophet, Priest, and King. May I remember that I shall be called hereafter to give an account whether I have received thee as my salvation or not. Specially let me recall this to mind at this hour, that I may be preserved throughout the day from the misuse of thy grace, and may lay hold of thee, saying with the bride in Solomon's Song, "I held him, and would not let him go," and with the patriarch Jacob, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Teach me to urge my morning petitions on the ground of thy vicarious sufferings during this hour ! May thy humiliation before

the judgment seat procure me boldness in prayer, to call on the eternal Judge as my reconciled Father ; and grant me cheerful confidence in anticipation of the day of judgment. Grant me also grace to examine myself daily, and so to maintain an humble sense of my character, as a poor sinner, meriting death and hell.

SIXTEENTH HOUR.

Friday, from 9 to 10, A. M.

MEDITATION.

O WHAT aggravated injuries did the Son of God receive during this hour ! The soldiers took him, as ravenous wolves seize a gentle lamb, and having bound him, stripped off his clothes, and scourged his holy back with cruel rage. Then arraying him in a scarlet robe, they platted a crown of thorns, and placed it on his head in mockery of his royal dignity, and having given a reed for a sceptre into his hand, bowed their knees before him, and deridingly saluted him as the King of the Jews, they afterwards took the reed again from his hand, and with it smote his sacred head, still encircled with the thorny crown. In this deplorable condition, they brought him again to Pilate, who endeavoured once more, by showing him to the people with these words, “ Behold the man ! ” to move them to pity, that they might consent to his release. But the blood-thirsty people, not content with that which Jesus had shed under the scourging and crowning with thorns, cried still more loudly, “ Crucify him, crucify him.” Hereupon Pilate, being fully convinced of the innocence of Jesus, proclaimed publicly, that he would be blameless concerning the blood of this righteous man, —that the Jews must take the responsibility of his death ; upon which the people cried with one accord, “ His blood be on us, and on our children ! ” Then Pilate, at length,

gave command that he should be crucified. These are occurrences most worthy of consideration, in contemplating which a whole life-time might be profitably expended. How much more, then, shall this hour be employed therein, during which all this befell the Friend of our souls ! What a blessing may my soul derive from it, if I but use faithfully the grace proffered me for that purpose ! Matt. xxvii. 24—31. Mark xv. 15—20. John xix. 12—16.

PRAYER.

Part 1. O Lord Jesus, thou tortured Lamb of God, may my soul be prepared to make a profitable use of the sufferings endured by thee during this hour ! But, ah ! my weakness and deficiency in this respect, none knows more fully than thyself. I am ashamed before thee under the consciousness of my great and guilty negligence in this respect. Earnestly do I pray thee to pardon me. I would cleanse me in the atoning blood, which thou didst shed, and take refuge in the wounds, which thou didst receive during this hour, and implore grace to make a better use of this hour throughout the remainder of my life, than I have hitherto done.

During thy sufferings they repeatedly unclothe thee, and put other garments on thee, and thus thou dyest with thy precious blood both thine own garments, and the scarlet robe, with which they clothed thee. O may those beauteous spots, which coloured thy garments, cover the hideous blotches with which my soul has been disfigured by pride and vanity in dress ! Grant that the shame and ignominy, connected with thy being stripped of thy garments, may become a perpetual blessing to me in warning me against inconsistency in apparel.

Thou wast scourged :—these are few words, but they mean many strokes, excruciating pain, and an unspeakable love which moved thee to take upon thyself so great sufferings. O Lord Jesus, how much hadst thou to suffer

on account of my carnal lusts and sinful luxuriousness !
Through the blood which thou didst shed while being
scourged, thou hast procured for me the pardon of all my
sins, especially the sins of the flesh.

On thy bleeding back described,
Freedom's charter do I see ;
'Tis in crimson lines inscribed,
My beloved, thou art free ;
My beloved,—All thy guilt was laid on me.

Oh, my compassionate Redeemer, how many fountains of
blood were opened on thy sacred back ! Here let every
thirsty soul come and drink. Do thou thyself excite
thirst in us, and cause us to partake of thy blood ! O
fount of truth, with what propriety didst thou compare
those who scourged thee to ploughmen, who made their
furrows long upon thy back ! (Ps. cxxix. 3.) In these
words thou hast certainly intended to represent how much
thy sinless body suffered from their cruelty. Ten thou-
sand thankful acknowledgments do I make, O Jesus, my
dearest Lord, for thy kindness. At length they unbind
thee, covered with blood and wounds. This place, where
thou sufferedst scorn, shame, and agony, might justly
have been assigned to me ; but thou didst stand there to
deliver me from these sufferings. O Lord Jesus, may I
now, in gratitude for thy love in suffering punishment in
my stead, confine, as with thy painful bonds, all my car-
nal propensities, and give no quarter to " the old man,"
when it would lead me into sin ! Oh grant me grace to
accomplish this !

Part 2. After having cruelly scourged thee, they, in
derision, clothed thee with a purple robe. Of a balm, or
soothing ointment, not a word is said ; for thou wast
denied any mitigation or alleviation of thy sufferings :
thus hast thou obtained for me so much ease and mitiga-
tion of my bodily pains and afflictions. Thy holy head,
moreover, is crowned with thorns, so that thy gracious

face is besprinkled with blood ; and each thorny point causes a separate wound, which is as a well, out of which, by faith, I may satisfy my thirsting soul ; and during the painful scourging thy sacred back and limbs were, likewise, covered with blood. Here I behold the fruit of my blood-reel sins and crimes. When the coronation of an earthly monarch takes place, a vast crowd assemble, and are so eager to witness the magnificent ceremony as to pay much money for a standing place whence it may be seen : but of thy coronation no such notice is taken, though it is not the token of thine accession to an earthly kingdom, but a means to the blessedness and salvation of the whole world. Yet grant that my soul may highly esteem thee and thy crown of thorns ! For through thy crown of thorns hast thou procured for me a crown of glory in the life to come. To Adam it was said, that for his sake the ground should be cursed, and should bring forth only thorns and thistles. O Lord Jesus, I and all men must have been overwhelmed by the thorns, which the earth has brought forth according to the Divine denunciation, if thou hadst not taken the curse upon thyself. In the garden of Gethsemane, thou didst, as it were, wash away the curse from the earth by thy bloody sweat ; and here thou allowest the thorns, which on our account the earth brought forth, to be pressed deeply into thy forehead and temples, as if they had taken root there ; thus changing the curse, which lay on the creature on account of sin into a blessing, so that the earth affords me now meat, drink, and raiment, and every comfort and necessary. This also I owe to thy thorn-crowned head. Oh may thy thorns be as channels, through which thy precious blood may be conducted to the garden of my soul, to render it fertile in the precious fruits of the Spirit ! May thy crown of thorns sanctify all the pains of my head ! By the merits of thy crown of thorns, crown me here “ with loving-kindness and tender mer-

cies," and yonder with an unfading crown of life and glory. O Lord Jesus, let the blood from thy head, like a divine anointing oil, flow upon me as a member of thy body, that through it I may become a spiritual priest and king. (Rev. i. 5, 6.)

O Jesus' vital blood !
 Thou healing, strengthening flood
 Of heavenly balm !
 Exuding from His head,
 O'er all his members shed,
 Reviving e'en the dead ;—
 Rich blood of Christ !

Part 3. Thy tormentors, O Lord Jesus, expose thee to derision, and bow their knees in mockery before thee, because thy regal dignity appeared to them worthy only of contempt. Show, I entreat thee, to my soul by thy Spirit thy divine majesty, that I may with deepest reverence bow before thee, and esteem thy shame and reproach more highly than all the honour and glory of the world.

Thou Heavenly Solomon, Prince of peace, before thy sceptre my timid heart needs not to be dismayed ; it is but a reed ; to intimate that thou wilt not break the bruised reed of my faith, but rather sustain it with thine almighty hand, that it may not come to nought. None, who go to thee, have to feel, like queen Esther, that they risk the alternative of life or death ; but whosoever approaches thee with a contrite heart, suing for his life, thou cheerfully and instantly reachest out to him thy sceptre, and givest him the kiss of peace and pardon. O thou patient Lamb, thou allowest thy tormentors to do with thee as they please. When they give the reed into thy shackled hands, thou takest it, and when again they snatch it from thee, thou dost not refuse it, but allowest them to smite thee with it on thy painful wounded head ; and at each blow, methinks, I see thy blood gush out more freely. O my soul, by faith draw profit from this. Approach thy bleeding Friend, and catch those precious drops, by which

thou art redeemed, and offer them to thy Heavenly Father, as a portion of thy incalculably costly ransom, and therewith refresh thy fainting spirit. Ah, my Lord Jesus, how much reason have I to be ashamed in the contemplation of thy love, which took upon itself such disgrace and torment, and induced thee to consent to be so piteously disfigured that Pilate, when thou wast brought back to him, even exhibited thee with amazement to the people, exclaiming, "Behold the man!" in order to excite their pity by thy lamentable condition. O may thy Holy Spirit continually recall these words to my remembrance;—"Behold what a man Jesus has become for thee! Behold how he has stood in thy room! Behold how much he has loved thee!" But, O Lord, thou knowest how blind I am, and unable to see thee, and how my eyes turn to any trifle, rather than to thee. Enlighten, therefore, the eyes of my understanding, and draw them more and more towards thyself and thy sufferings, with the magnet of thy love.

Oh how inhuman has the human heart become through sin! Thy enraged brethren according to the flesh, not moved to pity by thy piteous aspect, are rather excited to greater fury against thee, and upon Pilate's exhibiting thee before them, cry but the more loudly, "Away with him! away with him! crucify him! crucify him!" O my Saviour, I also have as cruel a heart in me, and am not a whit better than these people, nay, I am even worse than they; because I have a far clearer knowledge of Thee, and of thy love and sufferings, yet have often thrust thee from me, and even tortured and crucified thee anew by my sins. Grant that I may melt in shame and contrition before thee, and cry, with persevering eagerness of faith, "O Lord, crucify my old nature, and take possession of my heart for thyself! O Lord, strengthen my faith, and make my soul more and more desirous of thy presence and grace!"

Part 4. O Lamb of God, so far as thine own acts were concerned, thou wast perfectly innocent; and because it was indispensable that I and the whole world should know this, therefore was it that Pilate not only himself perceived thine innocence, but was also led to make a public and emphatic declaration of his convictions. And when his word seemed insufficient to convince the people, he took water, and washed his hands, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man;" upon which the people immediately cried with a loud voice, "His blood be on us, and on our children!" Ah, my Saviour, I cannot affirm that I am innocent of thy blood; nay, I know that I am guilty of it; for my sins pressed out thy blood in the garden; they were the whip, which scourged thee even to the shedding of thy blood; the executioners, that tormented thee; the thorns, which pierced thee; the instruments, which affixed thee to the torturing cross! I have become guilty of thy blood in having wilfully committed sin; nay, by every sin of omission and of commission, have I brought on myself the blame of thy death. And therefore thou mightst truly say to me, as Isaiah said to the Jewish nation, "Thy hands are full of blood." O my Redeemer, I acknowledge and confess my guilt, but cry also with a penitent and believing heart, Let thy blood be upon me, not to condemn, but to justify and cleanse me! In thy blood must I array my naked soul, therefore let thy blood be on me as my garment! With thy blood must I adorn my deformed soul, therefore let thy blood be on me as an ornament! With thy blood I must feed and refresh my hungry and thirsty soul, therefore let thy blood be on me to my comfort and salvation! Thy blood, the true balm of Gilead, must heal my wounds and diseases, let it therefore be on me as my medicine! If I, dead in sin, be renewed at all to spiritual life, which is from God, it must be through thy blood, and if I wish to

become an heir of a blissful and never-ending life, I must attain the blessing through thy blood. Let then, O Lord Jesus, thy blood be on us, and our children, for every end for which thou hast shed it.

Thy course, O my merciful Lord, is approaching its end: sentence of death, even the death of the cross, has been pronounced on thee, although thy judge, and his wife, and even thy betrayer have proclaimed thee innocent. How clearly do I perceive, in all this, that thou art the Lamb of God, appointed before the foundation of the world, to bear the sins of others, not thine own. How fully am I convinced that thou standest in my room, who have so richly deserved death! How fearless and happy can I now be, when by living faith I realize thee as my surety, condemned in my stead! I know now that God will not reject me, a poor sinful worm, but has accepted me in the beloved, and I can now boldly say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." And, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (1 Cor. xv. 55, 57. Rev. v. 12.) Therefore,

Rise, brethren, let our hearts be bold,
Christ's cross and gospel to uphold:
We'll unto death the Lamb adore,
God over all, blest evermore:
To Him be praise and honour paid;
How lost our state, without His aid!

SEVENTEENTH HOUR.

Friday, from 10 to 11 A. M.

MEDITATION.

DURING this hour, they took off the purple robe again from our Saviour, and put on him his own garment.

That this change of dress must have been attended with much pain, can safely be inferred from the previous conduct of the soldiers. How roughly may they have treated the unresisting Lamb ! His Divine patience may have only induced them to abuse him the more. After the bloody unclothing, they laid a heavy cross on the lacerated shoulders and bleeding back of our faithful Redeemer, and with this hurdensome load they conducted him to the mount of Calvary. But because his strength was exhausted by the sufferings he had endured, so that his fainting frame nearly sank under his burden, the soldiers compelled a man of Cyrene, of the name of Simon, to assist in carrying his cross to mount Calvary. This was the last, and the most laborious and painful journey, which our Redeemer took for us in the days of his earthly life. Under a heavy load, with exhausted strength, and amidst the pain of many wounds, inflicted by the cruel scourge and the crown of thorns, he went towards the place of execution, there to offer the remainder of his blood, along with his precious life, to his Father, in order to complete the work of our salvation. With what readiness he undertook this journey, is evident from his whole behaviour, but especially from his words to the women, who accompanied him with tears and lamentations. Matt. xxvii. 31, 32. Mark xv. 20, 21. Luke xxiii. 24—31.

PRAYER.

Thus goest thou, O Jesus, to suffer death for me, who am a sinner, and a wilful offender against thine authority ! O draw me after thee, in the fellowship of thy suffering, crucifixion, and death, that I may also participate in thy triumphant resurrection ! Thou art unchangeable in respect to the faithfulness of thy heart in suffering, though the garments in which thou didst suffer are repeatedly changed. All spectators may recognize thee the better, now that thou wearest thine own raiment, as the person, who

was already known by the name of Jesus in the whole land of Judea, and in many adjacent gentile countries : and thou art now, by thy death, giving the last and strongest proof, that thou art the long-promised Messiah, and Saviour of the world. (Isaiah liii. 10.) My soul acknowledges thee as such, and is no way offended, that, covered with blood and wounds, thou art carrying, as a criminal, thy heavy cross to Golgotha, there to be executed upon it. Thy fainting and bending beneath thy burden is no stumbling block to me. I am not offended at the fact, that thou camest unto thine own, and that they received thee not, but are about to execute thee on the ignominious cross. Rather are these most endearing marks to me that thou art indeed my Saviour. A thousand times be thou praised for being thus painfully unclothed, and for bearing on thy shoulders the heavy cross, on which thou didst subsequently bear my sins, and the sins of the whole world. These didst thou sustain on thy sacred back ; these lay so heavily on thee, that thou couldst scarcely support thyself under them ; these caused thy knees to tremble, and thy feet to stagger ; these thou draggedst along with thee up the hill, and causedst them to be nailed on the cross with thee. Yea, thou dear Lamb of God, I and my sins, which are unnumbered, like the sand of the sea, have caused thee this pain and these unspeakable sufferings. Therefore would I, a vile sinner, thank thee times without number, in time and eternity, that thou didst, in free, unmerited mercy, take my sins upon thee. I had deserved, and must have borne this punishment, if thou hadst shut me out from thy mercy ; but thou couldst not forbear to be merciful ; thy “ bowels were troubled for me,” until thou shewedst mercy unto me. (Jer. xxxi. 20.) Therefore, now, O Jesus, carry my sins to the cross and the grave ; bear them away from the sight and remembrance of the Father ; remove them from

my heart and conscience ; and let me, moreover, by living faith, and according to the purpose of thy affectionate heart, enjoy the great blessedness of knowing that thou hast taken them away.

Be my love from blood upspringing,
 Since thy blood from love doth flow ;
 Hallelujah I'd be singing,
 Long as thou shalt breath bestow :
 Slaughtered Victim,
 Thine be all my life below !

Thy way leads to the cross, and from the cross to heaven : and can mine be a more pleasant path ? O Lord, the Captain of my salvation, make me willing and ready to tread this path, and allow me not to go in any other ! All other ways lead directly to hell, but to follow thee in the way of suffering conducts to heaven. Let me, in thy strength, follow thee as well as I am able, and since I cannot follow thee closely with my infantile steps, let me the more eagerly stretch out my hands towards thee, that if I fall, thou mayst immediately support me with thy mighty hand. The journey to the heavenly Paradise is indeed most laborious for thee, but to the loving heart of thy disciple, who looks up to thee, it becomes easy. Distant journeys are generally connected with great expense, and truly it cost thee no less than thy life and precious blood to reach the place of thy destination. But thou hast thus defrayed not thine own travelling expenses only, but mine also, so that I can now sing loudly in the audience of the whole world, and of the devils of hell,

Released from all expense,
 My journey I pursue ;
 My friend conducts me stage by stage,
 His blood pays every due.

Thus I can, without apprehension, enter on my journey. The travelling expenses have been defrayed by my Friend ;

all necessary provisions and accommodations have been obtained for me through his blood ; and if weariness or weakness overcome me, I may lean on my Beloved. Thus my Saviour's path of suffering becomes to me the path to heaven.

Weary, pensive, pained, and bleeding,
Treadest thou, dear Lamb, thy way :
On thy mournful path proceeding
Sin's dire penalty to pay.

This sad march my way secureth
To my Father's dear embrace ;
From the vale of tears ensureth
My ascent to view His face.

Yea, truly does this thy bleeding, dying day atone for all my sinful steps. O let all my steps, if erroneous, be pardoned, and if correct, be sanctified, by these agonizing steps of thine. Lord Jesus, when I go out of the town for recreation, let me, with true penitence and faith, remember with what shame and torture thou wast led out of Jerusalem. When I re-enter the town, let me reflect that thou couldst not return, but hadst to surrender thy precious life, without the gates of the city. Let all my walks be taken in the blessed and happy remembrance of thee to thine honour, else they are sinful to me.

Since thou goest to meet death with the ponderous cross on thy back, how can I wish to do otherwise ? Let it suffice me that I have not to endure the burden of my sins, for that hast thou removed from me. Now let me, out of gratitude for thy love, carry my yet remaining cross willingly and patiently after thee. Let it be my daily resolution at this hour to take thy cross upon me, and to follow thee, as long as I live. O Saviour, make me ready so to do, for it will ever contribute to my welfare. May the contemplation of thy progress to Golgotha be, during this hour, as a rich pasture for me to feed upon by faith ! Let me, as it were, accompany thee to Calvary !

In thy deep punctures hiding
 O let me cleave to thee ;
 Beneath thy cross abiding,
 On fatal Calvary !

My old life from me sever,
 This death my life shall be :
 My Head doth live for ever,
 Hence love I Calvary.

EIGHTEENTH HOUR.

Friday, from 11 A. M. till noon.

MEDITATION.

THERE is no intermission in the love of Jesus ; it continues unretarded in its progress. While a breath remains to our Lover, or a drop of blood in his veins, his love renders him indefatigable in labouring, and undaunted in suffering, to secure our eternal welfare. In this hour a draught imbittered with gall was given him to drink ; his garments were once more, and for the last time, taken off ; and he was nailed to the cross, during which horrid deed he prayed for his executioners. After this, Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross ; and, lastly, the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, and cast lots for his coat. What thinkest thou, O my soul, of such important and unheard of events, which occurred to thy God during this hour ? Dost thou not feel that he has deserved so much of thee during this hour, that thou mayest well spend this hour of every day only in fervent praises and heartfelt thanksgivings ? Matt. xxvii. 33—37. John xix. 19—24.

PRAYER.

Part 1. O my dearest Saviour, thy love to me, a poor sinner, is so great, that I can but very imperfectly comprehend it, whilst in this mortal body. We discern such wondrous depths in thy sufferings, that the more we medi-

tate upon them, the more reason we find to ponder over them. Through them thou hast laid me under so vast obligations, that it is impossible for me to give expression to them ; therefore, wherever I may be, let me keep them perpetually before my eyes, and delight in them, and let them be a bright representation to me of thine innocence and true fidelity. O Lord Jesus, I repeat emphatically, " thy true fidelity." Oh, how sincere, cordial, disinterested, and faithful is Christ's affection ! This thou hast manifested to me again during this period of thy sufferings. Thy faithfulness influenced thee to taste the draught of gall. May this draught imbitter all sin to me. May thy love and the prospect of heaven be sweet to me, and the world bitter as wormwood in my esteem ! May thy bitter draught sanctify to me all recreations of mind and body, and be my refreshment at that solemn time, when the last draught I shall drink on earth shall be handed to me !

For the last time, thy garments are stripped off thee. Though thou possessedst no wealth in this world, but willingly becamest poor in order to enrich us, yet certainly thy raiment was thy own, but even this thou allowest to be taken from thee. O may I thus put off all self-esteem, self-will, and self-righteousness ! Grant thou me the needful strength for this act of self-renunciation, since thou hast purchased it for me by submitting to be deprived of thine apparel ! May thy Spirit likewise unfold to my soul the mystery and merits of this thy long-suffering and self-abasement !

O my most precious surety, now thou goest to the cross. From one scene of suffering thou proceedest but to another more intense. Thy bare body, whose recent wounds are again made to bleed, is tied to the shameful and accursed tree. Scarcely hast thou been unloosed from thy former bonds, but fresh ones await thee. Oh, how

hadst thou to atone for the shackles of sin, by which I allow myself so willingly to be bound ! Grant me the merits of thy last bonds, and deliver me from all my bondage, and should I still be subject to a subtle captivity to the flesh, oh, may thy love take possession of my heart, that I may be a captive to thee alone !

But this is not the whole of thy agonies ; thy limbs are now so stretched, that all thy joints are sundered, as thou thyself didst prophesy, “ All my bones are out of joint.” “ I may tell all my bones” (Ps. xxii. 14, 17.) Grant that all that is in me may be devoted to thee as an entire sacrifice !

Before thy cross my spirit prostrate lies,
Whence God, as from a throne, his grace bestows ;
My wondering soul thy outstretched limbs describes,
From which atoning blood most precious flows.

Here do I thee, the Prince of Life, behold
For cursed me thyself the curse endure :
This verifies the words thy lips foretold,
And proves each promise and prediction sure.

Thou art uplifted now 'twixt earth and sky,
With torment wrung, with ruthless scorn reviled ;
O Lamb, fulfil thy promise ; draw me nigh,
And here detain my soul in bondage mild !

Still, O Lord Jesus, the flood of thy torments rises higher and higher. Thou permittest them even to nail thy hands and thy feet ! Who can form a correct conception of thy sufferings ? It is thy unchangeable fidelity, which moves thee to surrender thy holy body, in my stead, to all this ill treatment. How many blows may it have required, before these four nails were securely fixed in thy hands and feet ! How vast a price, O Lord Jesus, has my heart cost thee ! How many rough roads hast thou had to tread,—how many blows to endure,—in order to obtain it ! Thousand thanks be to thee, for the wounds, which the nails inflicted on thee ! Thousand thanks for the benevolent design thou hadst in view !

Part 2. O my Saviour, thou sufferest innocently ; dost thou not then cry for vengeance on thy murderers ? Or does not thy innocent blood call out for revenge ? Oh no, no ! thy " blood speaketh better things than the blood of Abel ;" it cries for mercy and forgiveness, like thy most gracious lips. Once thou saidst that thou hadst not come to judge the world ; and of this thou now givest, from the cross, most positive and unanswerable proofs. Thou prayest for thine enemies, who are furiously hammering the nails into thy sacred, tender flesh. Thy flowing blood, and its inaudible, but effectual, voice, are accompanied by thy most kind and efficacious intercession. Thanks be to God, that thy intercession is for thine enemies and murderers, because then it includes even me, and I also may secure an interest in it by faith. My sins, which have crucified thee, were also then prayed for, and forgiven ; for thou hadst long before affirmed, in praise of thy Father, " I know that thou hearest me always ;" hence it is certain that he heard thee at this time also. O meek Lamb, how much reason have I to be ashamed that my temper and disposition are so unlike thine. May thy love towards thy enemies, evinced here in thy intercession, melt all the hardness, harshness, and implacability of my heart ; may these words, so precious, re-echo again and again in my ears, so as perpetually to awaken my attention, and unceasingly to engage my thoughts.

O thou perfect High-priest, how faithfully dost thou, in this thy day of atonement, perform thy office. Thou offerest up thyself for the sins of the people, and accompaniest the sacrifice with prayer for their forgiveness, sprinkled and sanctified by thine own atoning blood. Thy immolated body is covered with blood ; how acceptable and beautiful was this priestly robe in thy Father's eyes ; and in his ears each syllable of thy intercession was doubtless a sound even more pleasing than the bells of Aaron's

pontifical rohe. (Exodus xxviii. 33—35.) Like an incense of sweet savour, dost thou cast these precious words, “Father, forgive them,” on the fire of thy tender love, and therewith enterest into the Holy of holies. O may this sweet scent dissipate the abominable odour of my sins ! I know not how to express my gratitude, O beloved Saviour, but by ascribing praise, thanksgiving, and adoration to thee throughout all eternity. Thine is an eternal priesthood. (Heb. v. 6.) Oh then exercise it also in behalf of me, for I require every day that thou shouldst fulfil thine office, as a High-priest, on my behalf, according to my varying circumstances, with unchanging faithfulness. Enable me to repose in confidence on the tender fidelity of thy heart !

Part 3. O my Saviour, write on my heart thy supplication for thine enemies, and the title upon thy cross as a true pledge that all my sins are forgiven, and that thou art my Jesus too, and the sovereign of my heart. Certainly it did not happen by chance only that Pilate wrote such a noble title above thy cross ; nor was it without a Divine purpose that he could not be induced to alter it at the request of the Jews. Though thou wast hanging betwixt two murderers, between whom and thyself, externally, no difference was discernible ; yet did thy Heavenly Father devise means, to the end that an inquiring soul, who is seeking thee, need not be long in doubt whether thou art her Jesus or not : a believing glance at this title informs her with certainty, that thou art her Saviour. Thy sweet and lovely name of Jesus stands first ; and this alone is sufficient to refresh her, being to her as an ointment poured forth : she cannot read it too frequently, nor hear and talk of it too much ; because it is the name which thou receivedst with the shedding of blood at thy circumcision, and which thou now maintainest and vindicatest by the outpouring of thy blood. That thou mayest

be to us a Jesus indeed, thy name is associated with thy blood. My soul eagerly inquires after its meaning, and it rejoices her to hear that it signifies Redeemer, Deliverer, Saviour. Yea, my Saviour, my soul is delighted with this thy matchless name. And as thy name, so is thy glory, unto the utmost bounds of the earth. Thou art named Jesus, and verily a Jesus thou art : all I see of thee, gives me a glorious testimony to the fact, and the blood flowing from the punctures of the nails impresses a divine seal upon it. And, O Lord Jesus, may I but have my name associated with the names of thy sheep, then, for the joy and bliss of being amongst the blessed people whom my gracious King has chosen, should the world revile me, and charge many faults upon me, should it call me schismatic, hypocrite, and such opprobrious names, how little need I regard this, if I be but found faithful in fulfilling what thy word demands from me ! My new name, which thou hast written in the book of life, stands engraven on thy hand. O what a sweet reflection for my soul to feed upon ! As thy name was written above thy head upon the cross, so also is my name written above me in the book of life, yea, on the breast, and in the heart of thee, my glorious High-priest. O my Saviour, when I perceive thee on the cross, then do I also contemplate thy name, as imprinted on my heart. When thou sendest me any cross or affliction, and art observing me during its continuance, then read my name also with it ; and thou wilt then remember who I am,—how weak and frail, especially in suffering, and wilt not allow it to press too heavily on me, but wilt impart to me the needful strength to endure and improve it.

Yet, O Lord Jesus, thy title does not only witness that thou art Jesus, but informs me likewise whence thou art ; “ Jesus of Nazareth,” namely, Mary’s son, our brother, our flesh and blood, our kinsman, possessing the right of

redemption. Thou art from Nazareth ; it is well that this is inscribed on thy cross and written in thy word ; for I dare not recognize any other but Jesus of Nazareth. Thou art rightly called a Nazarene, (that is, set apart, or espoused,) for thou wast sanctified to the service of God. I have also, in my baptism, promised to be and remain the property of the triune Jehovah ; but how much cause have I to be ashamed of my faithlessness. Thou remainest faithful, and in thy faithfulness do I take my refuge, that it may atone for me.

Lastly, thy title says that thou art a King. The world sees nothing regal in thy present condition, but faith well discerns that, though on a cross, thou art reigning amidst thy enemies. Thy kingdom is not of this world, but an eternal and imperishable kingdom. Thy government is like thy glorious attributes. In thy commands thou hast only the welfare of thy subjects in view : and who then are they ? Who are the happy people, over whom thou art anointed King ? Thy Father says, (Ps. ii. 6) “ I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion ; ” and over thy cross I read that thou art the “ King of the Jews.” Thy people then are the people of Zion, or the spiritual Israel. O Lord Jesus, grant that I also may have the privileges of a citizen of Zion : make me too a spiritual Israelite, “ in whom there is no guile : ” be my King too ; watch over thy subject ; rule in my heart amidst thy enemies ! O my King, my Lord, and my God, to the red banner of thy blood I engaged myself at my baptism ; this engagement I now ratify beneath thy cross. I vow allegiance to thee as my lawful sovereign, yea, as my Lord, who hast redeemed, and delivered me, a poor, lost, wretched, and condemned creature, from death and the power of Satan ; and that not with gold and silver, but with thy holy, precious blood, and by thy blameless suffering and death, that I may be thine own, to live under the sceptre of thy king-

dom, and to serve thee in perfect righteousness and holiness. O my King, thou hast a triple right to me ;—as Creator, in having formed me out of nothing for thy service ;—as Redeemer, in having delivered me from the power of the enemy, and bought me with thy own blood ;—and as constituted Heir to thy Father, by whom I have been given to thee for thine inheritance. (Ps. ii. 8.) And I too have a triple claim on thee, as thou art my Creator, Redeemer, and Proprietor. Since then a threefold cord is not easily broken, hold thou me by this threefold cord, which no enemy can dissever, and never let me be separated from thyself ! Strengthen also my weak faith, that I may be enabled to hold fast on thee in time and eternity by this threefold cord ; and the less my ability to cleave to thee, the more do thou uphold me !

Thus thou art hanging on thy cross anointed to a threefold office ;—as my bleeding High-priest, who offers himself up for me, intercedes for me, and, with outstretched arms, confers his blessing on me ;—as my true Prophet, in whom all, which thou didst foretell respecting thyself and thy sufferings, is exactly fulfilled ; and as my everlasting King, who has bought a people for himself by his blood and atoning sacrifice, and put all his enemies, and those of his people, under his feet. And this thy threefold office is confirmed and consecrated by thy blood, now so freely flowing, which renders it yet more pleasing to thy Father. For the sake of thy precious blood, all that thou art doing and suffering is valid in heaven ; thy Father looks upon all as sprinkled with thy reconciling blood. These three names in thy title : “ Jesus,”—“ of Nazareth,”—“ King,”—are to me as a comprehensive treatise in three books, on which I may be allowed to argue thus, and by faith to draw some such conclusions as these. Is he, that hangs on the cross covered with blood and wounds, my Jesus, my Redeemer, Saviour, and Deliverer ?

Then am I delivered and saved from all my enemies. Is he Jesus of Nazareth? Then is he the veritable promised Messiah. Is he a Nazarene, that is, as it may be understood, God's betrothed? Then is this also of excellent use to me. I, a faithless breaker of the covenant, unite myself to Him, and thus become, along with him, God's betrothed; for whatsoever belongs to the bridegroom is appropriated by the bride also for her own use. Is he my King? Then am I his favoured subject. Faith adds the golden word, "my," for as I cordially desire to appropriate him, what should hinder me from possessing him, since he is offered without money and without price? Moreover, there is no fence around mount Calvary, as around mount Sinai, and no prohibition to touch the one, as there was to touch the other. Exodus xix. 12. Nay, his blood unceasingly declares, He that is desirous, let him come and receive my grace, and that gratuitously! Thousand thanks be to thee, O Lord Jesus, for all which thou hast purchased for me by thy so willingly enduring the death of the cross!

Part 4. O Lord Jesus, my crucified Saviour, whilst thou art hanging fast nailed to the cross, what shall be the fate of my "old man?" Shall he be left at liberty to do as he will? Oh, what shame would this entail on any person, who is called by thy name! Nay, let me rather show no more pity to my "old man," and his lusts, than was shewn to thee during thy sufferings. Grant, therefore, that I may sincerely and incessantly beseech of thee,

O be my carnal nature crucified;
 Be sin's vile yoke for ever laid aside!
 It is my longing soul's intense desire,
 Upon the cross with Jesus to expire.

I know well, my Saviour, that if I would participate in all the blessings of thy cross, I must also be willing to die to sin, to crucify the old man by continual repentance and

faith, and withhold every thing from him, that would tend to his encouragement. Would to God that herein I might prove faithful and persevering ! By thy crucifixion thou hast procured strength and grace for me, O help me, by true faith, to partake plentifully of the gracious supply ! The old man, with all his lusts ; sin, with all its charms ; the world, with all its enticements ;—all that is not of Jesus Christ, must be brought and slain at his cross.

O Holy Spirit of God, unfold clearly to my soul the cross of Christ ; take the nails and spears, wherewith my Saviour was tormented, and so pierce and transfix my “old man,” that he may become weak and powerless, and more and more incompetent for any unlawful deed, until at length he be completely annihilated. I am well aware that this is not done quickly, which fact is represented by the lingering death of the cross. They who were crucified died, not at once, but gradually, through loss of blood. This may encourage me to exercise patience, when the crucifixion and mortification of my old nature do not progress as speedily as I could wish. Grant me, O Holy Spirit, daily the necessary strength, that I may be faithful and persevering in the mortification of the members that are upon the earth. (Col. iii. 5.) If it cost my dear Saviour so much to deliver me from the tyrannical power of the old man, should I not then esteem it my greatest happiness, to enjoy more and more of this glorious liberty ?

Thou hadst also, O my Saviour, to be a witness to the act of thy executioners, in taking thy garments, and dividing them amongst them, and casting lots for thy coat. This act might appear, indeed, to many accidental and unimportant, yet is it, in fact, highly important, for it stamped an additional seal on the identity of thy person and office, as being in truth the promised Messiah, of whom all this had been predicted ; consequently, it strengthens my faith in thee as my Saviour, and I give

thee therefore my heartfelt thanks, that thou hast allowed this to be done to thee.

Thy material garments I willingly leave to thine enemies : but, O my Redeemer, I am daily in need of a garment to cover my spiritual nakedness ; and my soul can use no other but thy blood and innocence and righteousness. Thou canst not tolerate any stain of sin, but the robe of my own righteousness is a very stained one, and is so tattered that my nakedness appears through it in every part. Moreover, I want also a wedding garment, that I may be able to appear in the presence of thy Father, and all the holy angels, and my shame and nudity may not appear. Where can I obtain a pure and perfect garment, but thy blood and righteousness ? This shall be—this alone can be, my robe of honour and wedding apparel, wherein I shall be able to stand in judgment, and even be acquitted of all blame. And when, at length, the marriage of the Lamb begins, where it will be expected of me as thy bride, that I should sit at thy table, and be like thee in glory, the fairest among the children of men, and that my splendour and beauty should surpass even that of my first parents in their innocence ; O Lord Jesus, where shall I procure a robe ? Not from the world, for this world has nothing to give worthy of the bride of Jesus ; not from the citizens of heaven, because they themselves wear apparel bestowed by thee. Therefore, O Lord Jesus, I must and will receive my bridal robe from thee, even the robe of thy immaculate righteousness ; and this thou wilt not deny me, else should I be lost for ever !

Whosoever acknowledges his shame and nakedness, and the abominable stains of his sins, and wishes to be cleansed,—whosoever recognizes no other helper but thee, and takes his refuge with childlike confidence in thee, hungers and thirsts after thy righteousness, and puts it on as his garment, is acceptable to the Father. O Lord Jesus, I

also wish to be accepted in the beloved, therefore do I entreat thee to lead me still forward in the blessed way of repentance and faith, in which I may more and more abundantly partake of thy grace !

Part 5. O my Saviour, how consolatory to me is the view of those, in whose company thou art hanging on the cross. They are murderers, who have stained their hands with innocent blood ;—they are rebels, wicked men, great transgressors, even in the view of their fellow-men, as is proved by the punishment they are undergoing. Oh ! what deep humiliation is it to thee, that thou art in such society ! Thousand thanks be to thee, for this act of condescension ! Ah, Lord Jesus, it is certainly thy design hereby to give me courage and boldness towards thee, and convince me, what a friend of sinners thou art, how readily thou approachest them, and art not at all ashamed of them. 'Thou hadst previously displayed during the course of thy life, when thou wast so willing to be in the society of sinners, that thine enemies were constrained to afford thee this testimony, so gratifying to us, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." And thou submittest to be crucified between two malefactors, that I may see that thou carriedst the same condescending disposition even to thy dying day.

O Lord Jesus, I am likewise a murderer, and have stained my hands with thine innocent blood,—a criminal, yea, a sinner even in the sight of men, because the superior light, which thou hast graciously afforded me, gives to all my sins, however insignificant they may appear in the judgment of others, a blood-red hue ; and thus I believe myself even worse than these murderers. But as I acknowledge this my great misery, and since I cannot be satisfied without thee, I thrust myself into the society of these murderers, and by faith am assured that thy outstretched arms will also receive me, a poor sinner.

Yea, Lord Jesus, I would be the first to run into thy arms ; let me enjoy the first-fruits of thy sufferings !

O my merciful Redeemer, bless to me especially this forenoon hour for the contemplation of the sufferings, which thou didst endure at this time. Let me enjoy the fruits of them by faith, and so be strengthened to repentance, faith, and holiness !

NINETEENTH HOUR.

Friday, from noon, till 1 P. M.

MEDITATION.

DURING this hour, we are accustomed to satisfy our natural appetites with meat and drink. But to our faithful Mediator this was an exceedingly sorrowful hour. He hung on the cross, through the whole hour, as one accursed, enduring the most excruciating pains, in the greatest distress and agony of soul, and had likewise to hear the most abominable mockeries from the vassals of Satan.

Amidst all this, he recommended to his mother one who would supply the place of a son, saying, " Woman, behold thy son ;" and to his disciple one whom he should cherish with filial affection, charging him thus, " Behold thy mother." He also promised the enjoyment of paradise to the repenting thief, with these sweet words, " Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." These important occurrences occupy but little time in the writing, but when seriously considered, they furnish matter for the contemplations of eternity : wisely, therefore, may we dedicate an hour during the day, and especially the present one, to their consideration, and engage in silent thoughts on the fervent love, and deep sufferings of Jesus. At noon, we generally rest from our labours, but our Redeemer toiled without ceasing, and

deprived himself of all bodily and mental recreation. He showed towards us the love of a true Redeemer, evinced by his words, and ratified by the blood which was still streaming from his wounds. John xix. 26, 27. Luke xxiii. 39—43.

PRAYER.

Part 1. O Lord Jesus, my most precious Mediator, what genuine fidelity dost thou manifest during this hour also towards me, a perfidious sinner ! What astonishing proofs of thy glowing love dost thou successively set before me ! As the sun, at noon, rises to its greatest elevation, and emits its hottest beams, so doth also thy love. O sanctify all my noonday hours by reflecting on thy matchless love ! As accursed, thou art hanging on the cross, taking upon thyself the curse in my room, to obtain for me the blessing. O Lord Jesus, who could have credited this, had not thy word declared it ? What awful things does the word, "curse," express ! Every degree of misery, anguish, fearfulness, distress, and wretchedness is included in this melancholy term. Dear Saviour, my mind cannot grasp the wondrous thought, that thou, the eternal Son of God, the Source of all blessedness, in whom all bliss and excellency centre, shouldst become a curse. How much less, then, can I attempt to express it in words ! Thy love is too high for me ; I cannot reach it. My powers cannot devise a similitude, by which to illustrate thy compassion ; much less can I recompense thee for these proofs of thy love ! But with deep contrition of heart, and by the grace of thy Holy Spirit, will I believe it, and, through it, expect every variety of blessing from the hands of thy Father. My curse,—yea, all the many curses, which I have deserved through the transgression of God's commandments, lie on thee. Therefore, O holy Lamb of God, not only didst thou bear a curse, but thou wast thyself accursed ; for holy Scripture

saith, "He that is hanged is accursed of God." (Deut. xxi. 23.) O my Saviour, I, a poor worm, can neither measure the height of thy love, nor trace its length or breadth, nor fathom its depths. But I would sink down in its bottomless depths, till I happily lose myself in them.

No friendship can boast so endearing a bond,
 No mother a love so intense or so fond,
 No bridegroom's attachment such warmth can pretend,
 As the boundless affection of Jesus my friend !

During the preceding hour, thou hadst bestowed an invaluable gift, even the chief and most important of all gifts,—the forgiveness of sin : now thou takest care for the temporal necessities also of thy people. Such was thy uniform mode of proceeding throughout thy ministry. When thou hadst a certain poor diseased man before thee, thou saidst first, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee;" afterwards thou didst also remove his bodily malady. Thus hast thou exemplified thy own principle, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness ; and all these things," viz. needful temporal supplies, "shall be added unto you." Yea, Lord Jesus, thou all-wise physician, and all-powerful helper, thou hast a perfect understanding of our diseases and wants, and to heal them effectually, thou beginnest inwardly. O grant that I may ever be more anxious about my internal sicknesses, than about my external ailments !

Here thou givest to thine afflicted mother, in the person of John, another son. O considerate Saviour, thou mightst have deferred this till after thy resurrection, but this was too long for thy love to delay. Thou hastenest to gladden the heart of good Mary at once, and immediately to recompense her faithfulness in standing so near the cross, in the best way that circumstances allowed. For none who, from love to thee, stand near thy cross, shall be sent away empty. This is proved by the example of thy mo-

ther and John. Oh! how much did this, thy beloved disciple, lose by being deprived of thy sweet intercourse! How much must he have felt the loss of thy loving bosom! 'Thou wast well aware of this, therefore surrenderedst him to the care and society of thy dear mother.

Here, O my Saviour, do I clearly perceive how entirely. I should oppose my own interests, by pursuing day and night after earthly things, since the blessing of thy hand can enrich me in an hour. Thou hast only to say, "Behold, this is thine," and mine it is. But without thy gracious bestowment, I can receive nothing. 'Thou wilt not long deny me the needful supply of my real wants. 'Teach me, O my Saviour, since thou didst so kindly provide for thy mother and John, to receive all gifts, as from thy hands, especially during the present hour! O thou, the Giver of every good gift, how often hast thou at noon richly spread my table with refreshments; but how have I to be ashamed before thee, that I think so little of thee, while partaking of them. Forgive my sinful conduct in this matter, and grant me grace, that, at every meal, I may spread my table, as it were, before thy cross; and, in every morsel that I eat, may taste thy love! But let me, moreover, enjoy thy gifts with temperance, and not make my belly my God, by which act I should prove myself an enemy of thy blessed cross. May thy good Spirit, in this respect likewise, lead me according to thy holy will!

Part 2. O Lord Jesus, thou Sun of righteousness, now begins that miraculous darkness, which continues for three hours. The sun, contrary to the course of nature, withdraws his beams, as if he were mourning his Creator's woes, and were averse to such a melancholy spectacle as that of thy hanging, like one accursed, on the cross, covered with blood and wounds. What were the agonies of thy mind during this time may be learnt from the Psalms, and

is more fully expressed in thy sad exclamation at its close. (Matt. xxvii. 46.) O Lord Jesus, thou hast here tasted for me the everlasting darkness, reserved for the wicked. I am not worthy that the sun should shine upon me, and the earth support me ; this confession have I often made before thee with bitter tears : but thou, the Eternal Light, whose dwelling is in the glory and splendour of heaven, takest a part in our misery, and hankest, so to say, between heaven and earth,* as if thou wert not worthy that earth should afford thee a residence, though thou art its Creator and Preserver. To such lengths didst thou go in humiliation for our sakes !

Moreover, I have wilfully become a child of darkness, loving darkness rather than light. Of this thou hadst to experience the bitter effects. I have deserved everlasting darkness, but in order to deliver me from it, thou art undergoing its gloomy horrors. Night, as one has remarked, is a friend to none, even if occurring in its natural course ; how much less when it comes to eclipse the brightness of noon-day. But that, of which all men feel an instinctive dread, comes on thee. Every element of the wretchedness and misery of mankind is poured out for thee, and thou drinkest all the cup of wrath, out of immeasurable love to poor sinners. Unnumbered thanks be given thee, O dearest Saviour ! Thy love is inexpressible, and it is incredible to him that is not taught by the Holy Spirit. Permit me to partake richly of the merits of these sufferings ! Thou shalt be my light, which I will follow here below ; and thou my sun in the realms above, in the lustre of whose beams I may gladly walk in the city of my God.

Part 3. Ah ! Lord Jesus, how wicked and obstinate is the human heart ! One would have hoped that by the unusual darkness at noonday, all thy enemies would have been led to solemn reflection ; but no ! they harden their

hearts like adamant. Hence the abominable blasphemies, which they utter against thee, thou silent and suffering Lamb ! Of the abundance of their heart their mouth spake. The lowest rabble reviled thee, the Supreme Majesty, at whose name all knees must bow with the deepest reverence. Some of their revilings the evangelists have recorded. Here they surround thee, wagging their heads, and citing, in derision of thee, their mistaken notion that thou didst foretell the destruction and rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem, when, in fact, thou wast speaking of the holy temple of thy body. So little, O Lord Jesus, art thou esteemed ! So despicable and contemptible art thou in the sight of the natural man, though, in truth, the most lovely and desirable of beings. O my Saviour, mayst thou become to me more and more valued, agreeable, and precious. When I see Satan, and the world lying in the wicked one, let me turn away my head with the greatest abhorrence ; but when I behold thee, especially on the cross, let my inmost soul be moved with tender affections towards thee, and let my heart truly be revived by the consideration of thy worth and beauty !

Try, Lord, the measure of my love !
 Do all my powers of soul above
 Towards Christ, my Saviour, rise ?
 Do I esteem my Saviour so,
 That all my heart with love doth glow,
 When on him rest my eyes ?

Further they say, " Save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." How vast are my obligations to thy persevering faithfulness, that thou didst not save thyself, and descend from the torturing cross, as, being the Son of God, thou hadst full ability to do. If I, in suffering, had power to escape, as thou hadst, I should certainly avoid it ; but it is well that I cannot do so, and that my carnal nature, which shrinks so much from the cross, must sustain it, whether it be willing or

not. Through thy perseverance hast thou obtained for me the Spirit of strength and perseverance; let it, therefore, be vouchsafed to uphold me in every trouble!

But not the ignorant common people alone mock and deride thee; the great and learned also, who should have reprimanded them, do the same. Thou art to all a stumbling-block and rock of offence. Still, were they not less rude and violent than the rabble? Oh no! They used almost the same words, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Out of these poisoned words of blasphemy would I suck sweet honey of consolation. Blessed be God that thy very enemies are constrained to testify that thou didst save others! Thus they confess the truth. Truly thou hadst holpen others; all that were in need, and came to thee, didst thou gladden by thine effectual aid; and now art thou about to extend thine aid to the whole world. Lord Jesus, I would change the blasphemies of thine enemies into humble and believing prayer, and say, O my Saviour, thou hast holpen others; help me likewise, that I too may bear testimony to thy willingness to save. Thou canst and wilt, if but I allow thee to do with me according to thy will; but ah! my corrupt self, like a block, is a continual obstruction to thy purpose. O my almighty Saviour, do thou thyself remove all obstacles out of the way, and, if they do not easily give way, break through them by thy mighty power! O Lord Jesus, I place myself, needy and helpless in all respects, under thy cross; in me display thy skill and power in affording aid! To thee I surrender myself afresh to be altogether thine: do with me as thou pleasest, and take away from me whatever is offensive in thy sight! Thou well knowest that I am exceedingly weak, and unfit for the duties that devolve on me; therefore, O my High-priest, make haste to heal me.

Further, they deride thy threefold office, saying, "If he be the Christ,—the King of Israel,—the chosen of God, let him save himself." O my Redeemer, whilst wicked men revile thy office as Messiah, my soul, nevertheless, trusteth in thee as my Prophet, Priest, and King; it believeth the sure testimony of the word of God concerning thee, rather than all the blasphemies of thine enemies. They mocked, also, thy genuine faith, and unshaken reliance in God, saying, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him." Lastly, they attack thy Sonship also, saying in mockery, "He said, I am the Son of God." O Lord Jesus, thou adorable Image of the invisible Jehovah, what a shower of blasphemies fell upon thee during these gloomy hours, in which thou wast hanging on the cross! How many sins hadst thou to atone for by enduring this ignominy! And even now thou art still derided by the blind world, as well in thine own glorious person as in thy members. O preserve me from ever offending thee in such a way, and should I be exposed to the taunts of others, O grant me meekness and patience like thine own! O Lord Jesus, should the devil, in times of affliction and distress, tempt me respecting my faith, my election, or my acceptance as a child of God, then remind me of what occurred to thee on the cross, and let my faith be strengthened by the recollection of it, since "the disciple is not above his master." Grant that the scorn, which thou didst endure, may become to me a fountain of praise and thanksgiving!

Part 4. O Lord Jesus, who could have thought that even those criminals, who were crucified with thee, would have put thee to scorn? For some time, thou hadst been hanging on the cross in silence, but now one of the thieves gave thee occasion to speak again. Having been convinced of the sinfulness of his own mockeries of thee, and having then reprimanded his companion in suffering

for his conduct in this respect, he turned to thee, entreating thee to remember him when thou shouldst come into thy kingdom : whereupon thou immediately gavest him the precious promise, that on that very day he should be with thee in Paradise. O Lord Jesus, this is indeed a narrative most interesting to me. In the first place, the behaviour of the thief is instructive to me. How do his repentance and faith give me reason to be ashamed in many respects ! How clear is his knowledge concerning thee, how hearty his acceptance of thee, how strong his confidence in thee ! Lovely, too, to me is thy dealing towards him ! Not only dost thou not let him ask in vain, but thou answerest his petition as soon as he ceases to speak ; and such a reply, certainly, he could not have expected, for thou promisest him much more than he requested of thee. He that does not yet know the kindness of thy heart, should repair to mount Calvary, and listen to thy sweet words, and observe thy condescending behaviour towards this sinner, all so perfectly in accordance with the tenor of thy name of Jesus. As often as thou openest thy mouth, thou pourest out thy very soul, as it were, along with thy words. How glad art thou, when a poor sinner makes his prayer to thee ! It seems as if thou wert impatient to give him a proof of thy perfect willingness to save. None can ever ask too much of thee ! Thou ever givest with overflowing bounty, for thy heart is an inexhaustible source of blessing. And because poor timid souls often think thy answer to be too precious for them to take to themselves, and through weakness of faith, and a feeling of utter unworthiness, dare not apply it to their own case ; therefore thou here, as in many other passages of Holy Writ, confirmest the most precious promise with the positive affirmation, “ Verily, I say unto thee.” The greater our necessities, the greater thy readiness to save. This poor man had but a few

moments to live after that he had asked of thee to remember him in thy kingdom ; therefore thou hastenest to fulfil on his behalf thy promise, “ I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” Thou didst not forsake him for even a moment, but tookest this poor sinner with thee into paradise, as a trophy of the cross. Yea, my Saviour, here do I clearly see that not only in the world wast thou not ashamed of sinners, but that also in heaven thou art not ashamed of them, nay, thou makest a display of them there, as the trophies of thy victory. None knows, to the full extent, the loving tenderness of thy heart towards sinners but thy Father, and therefore was it, that when specifying a reward for thy great and painful sufferings, he gave thee the promises, “ He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.” “ I will divide him a portion with the great.” O Jesus, heaven itself will not satisfy thee without the presence of redeemed sinners there ; thou wilt not even enter into it without taking one along with thee, so much dost thou love their society ! This single event of the thief’s application to thee, and thy compassion to him, ought to be sufficient to melt my whole heart, if I knew nothing more of thy character and history, ; But oh ! what reason have I for shame and blushing, that I know so much more of thee, and have often had experience of thy love to sinners in my own soul, and still there is so much unbelief, mistrust, indifference, and apathy in my heart ! Ah ! my Saviour, have pity on me, and help me to avoid whatever displeases thee !

The thief, in turning away from himself and his cross to thee and thy cross, found in thy cross a ladder to heaven, and thou didst receive him into the fellowship of thy cross, by saying that he should be that day in Paradise, and adding the words, “ with me.” The confidence and faith which the thief possessed made him one with

thee : with these words thou ensuredst to him the entire fruits of thy 'crucifixion. O my Saviour, grant me also grace, that I may turn entirely away from myself, and the manifold sufferings of this life, and rest with my whole soul on thee and thy cross, so that I may say with truth,

Jesus, from all its woe and need
Thy blood and cross my soul have freed,

and thus may thy cross, be to me also a ladder to heaven, on which I may by faith ascend to be 'made one with thee ! Oh, how happy is the poor sinner, who has fellowship with thee in thy cross ! Without the cross, the thief could not have gone to heaven, nor couldst thou, O my Head, have been made perfect through sufferings. Let not me, then, desire any other way ! 'Thou art aware of my aversion to this way, yet O comply not with it, but continue to correct me with thy rod of love, until, all tempests and dangers being passed, I reach the haven of endless repose !

But, O Jesus, amidst my crosses, speak to me also such sweet words as thou didst address to the thief, and remind me of the happy issue of all my sufferings, and that they are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall follow. Strengthen me to lay hold of thee by faith ; make my hope of eternal life assured and fervent, and my love to thee ardent and glowing ; and create in me a strong desire, for thy sake, to be made conformable to thee by means of my afflictions ! All this do thou bestow through the infinite value of thy merits ! Amen.

TWENTIETH HOUR.

Friday, from 1 to 2, P. M.

MEDITATION.

It would appear from the narratives of the four evangelists, that our Saviour hung bleeding on the cross dur-

ing this hour, still as a lamb, amid the greatest pains and agonies, it being recorded that the four sayings, which he afterwards uttered, were not spoken till after the great darkness. But, though not speaking audibly, how much silent intercourse, perhaps, he held with his Father ! How many sighs and tears may he have presented before the throne ! How did his freely flowing blood cry aloud for sinners, and offer itself as a full and everlasting ransom ! Assuredly, here also doing was associated with suffering. His holy soul was labouring to the utmost of its strength for our salvation, at the same time that it was suffering to the last point of endurance : and as his inward agony in the garden rose to a higher and still higher intensity, the nearer it approached its end ; so, likewise, his sufferings before his judges, and on the cross, which affected him in both body and soul, rose higher and higher, until they reached their consummation, which was that our most precious Mediator had even to taste the very torments of hell for us, in the being forsaken of his Father, and all its attendant woes.

This was, to outward appearance, a quiet hour, but ah ! there was no calm in Jesus' breast. Floods of suffering and waves of affliction were beating upon his soul, and the monsters of the deep were roaring around him, and doing their utmost to torment him, knowing that his sufferings would now be soon at an end. Added to which, our hateful transgressions, with all their curses and consequences, fell like a dire tempest upon Jesus, occasioning him a further dreadful and unexampled trial of faith, and causing him to feel in his soul as though God had forsaken him, notwithstanding which he still clave to his God, and thus his faith gained him the victory. How much more important a conflict this, than even Jacob's, of which we read in Scripture ! Moreover, during this hour the sacred body of Jesus suffered most intensely in

all its parts and members, and his precious blood continued to flow from his four wounds.

What must, during this hour, have passed in the heart of the Father likewise ! Perhaps the sighs and groanings of the Son, though not loud, were to his Father's ears as a piercing cry, to move his bowels to show compassion to sinners. The sacrifice of Jesus was an offering of a sweet savour to Him. What an extreme of Divine complacency must the obedience unto the death of the cross, the genuine faith, the meek patience, and the perfect love of the Son have produced in His infinite mind ! May God grant to every redeemed sinner the grace to spend this hour in holy silent commemoration of the love of Jesus !

PRAYER.

Part 1. O my Saviour, may I at least, for my own part, do as I have said. O thou tranquil Lamb, grant me daily, during this hour, the necessary calmness of soul for a solemn, penitent, believing contemplation of thy great love and unexampled sufferings. If little is recorded that befell thee outwardly during this period, the more laboriously didst thou exert thyself inwardly for the salvation of the human race. That awful darkness still envelopes thee, which had begun in the preceding hour, and thou wast altogether forsaken, not only by disciples and relatives, and even the holy angels, but by God himself also, whose eternal and only begotten Son thou art ; and left comfortless, and devoid of all consolation and peace of mind. At the close of this darkness, which continued for three hours, didst thou utter those mournful and memorable words, " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? " Of the deep mysteries, which lie concealed in these words, we can understand but little, on account of our great weakness ; but in eternity all will be disclosed. This outward darkness was a type of the darkness of hell, under which, in some sense, thy most

holy soul was lying, and enduring no less than the wrath of God, which my sins and those of the whole world have deserved ; which wrath constitutes the torment of the damned, in so far as it consists in mere suffering, considered apart from active wickedness ; for the damned souls sin even in hell against God by their hideous blasphemies and curses, from all approach to which thy most holy soul was most free and pure. There was, so to say, nothing inflammable in thy guiltless breast, and hence these sins,—sparks of hell,—could kindle no fire in it, but were immediately extinguished in the crystal waters of thy holiness. On the contrary, most glorious virtues shone conspicuously from thee, even through the gloom of this darkness. Thy pure and persevering love to thy Father, and to poor sinners, thy unswerving faithfulness, thy perfect obedience, thy childlike confidence, thy pure faith, thy enduring patience, and thy incomparable divine meekness, were all as bright stars, which proclaimed thee to be the eternal Son of God, even in the darkest night, and deepest humiliation.

O Lord Jesus, as a sheep destined for slaughter, have I deserved to lie in the jaws of hell, and to be devoured by eternal death : but oh ! what vast, incomparable love is thine, that in order to rescue me, thou, as my substitute, didst accept my doom, and leap for me into the jaws of an accursed death ! May the hellish torments, therefore, which thou didst undergo, conduce to my welfare. By this hell-like anguish, which continued for three hours, hast thou rescued my soul from the infernal wolf, and set me in perfect safety. O grant that I may never again become his servant by wilfully sinning against thee ! O my Saviour, let me never forget at what a price thou hast redeemed me ! Through thy being forsaken of God, thou hast restored to me the most intimate and blessed union, and the most confidential communion with him, and moved his heart to the most tender love. Truly, then,

inexpressible and inestimable are the fruits of thy enduring thy Father's frown. How great blessings has thy true faith, by which thou didst cleave to God, when deprived of the comforts of his presence, merited for me! How hadst thou to endure the consequences of my blind unbelief, entailed in unmitigated bitterness on thy innocent soul! Thus didst thou procure for me the necessary strength to believe that, through thee, God is my reconciled Father; not only in pleasant days, when the light of thy countenance is shining upon me, and when I taste thy grace and love; but also then, when it appears as if thou hadst withdrawn thy gracious presence, and hidden thy face from me, so that my soul sees and feels nothing but unhappiness, distress, grief and sin, with its painful consequences. That I am authorized to believe under such circumstances, is itself a great favour, but to be enabled to do so is a yet greater. May then thy words of faith, "My God, my God," aid me, O Lord Jesus, whether in joyous or distressful seasons!

If, amid spiritual darkness, I repeat these words after thee, then particularly let me realize their power, and enjoy the result of thy being forsaken of God! Then watch over the little spark of my faith, and let thy meritorious faith, thy prayers, and sighs, and tears powerfully assist me; but more especially, O Lord Jesus, in the night of death may thy darkness be my light; thy agony, my consolation; thy sighs, my song; thy prayers, my plea; and thy tears sanctify my weeping! May thy enduring thy Father's frown be the ground of my hope to be for ever united with Him!

Part 2. O Lord Jesus, here thy love and thy sufferings of body and soul have risen to the highest degree, and so have also thy infinite merits, which procure the atonement of my sins, and the remission of my punishment, as well as my possession of all happiness and bliss.

But what can I, a most miserable and unworthy worm, say or write that is worthy of such a subject? Therefore do I entreat thee that thou wouldst produce in my heart a suitable sense of this tender love, which thou, as a compassionate Saviour, hast shewn to me, in enduring for me the anguish of hell, and in the inestimable boon conferred through thy sufferings, and graciously make me a partaker of the blessing. O let not thy agony be lost on me, or on any near and dear to me, for the sake of thy blood, that also flowed from thee under these severe sufferings;—for the sake of that torment, under which thou didst hang, like a speechless lamb, upon the cross;—for the sake of the hell-like torture, which thou didst endure!

Alas! O Lord Jesus, thy torments and thy sufferings increased hourly,—thy love rose higher and higher,—the amount of the precious ransom thy blood has paid became larger and larger,—the hand-writing which was against me grew less and less valid,—one item after another of the catalogue of my sins was blotted out; and there remained but a brief period ere thou shouldst say, “It is finished.” Then was my redemption fully accomplished, in the largest sense of the words thou didst utter, “It is finished.” But, O Lord Jesus, why does not my grateful acknowledgment of thy love rise higher? Why is not my obdurate heart rendered more penitent by the consideration of thy sufferings,—my distrustful heart more believing,—my fickle heart more steadfast,—my treacherous heart more faithful,—my revengeful heart more patient,—my proud heart more humble,—my merciless heart more loving,—in a word, why has not my wicked heart become more pious and holy? O my merciful Redeemer! the fault is not thine, but mine only. Alas! I have not sufficiently improved thy sufferings, thy love displayed in them, and thy merits attained through them; hitherto, I have been far too indolent and wandering in mind; my distracted

thoughts have not been collected around thee as they should, nor fed sufficiently on the refreshments of the cross ; I have not yet deprived my carnal nature of all that tends to foster it ; I have not yet prayed with fervour enough for the power and fruit of thy sufferings. Ah ! faithful Jesus, true fidelity is wanting in me : grant it me from thy cross ; let it, together with thy precious blood, that thou pouredst out for me, flow from thy ever-faithful into my perfidious heart, to make it willing and ready to live henceforth only to thy glory, and bestow on me, through it, the pardon, likewise, of my past culpable behaviour !

Lord, a steadfast mind bestow ;
 Haughty passions bring thou low ;
 Straying fancies regulate ;
 Callous feelings penetrate ;
 Henceforth let my Friend alone
 Occupy affection's throne !

For this is thy daily occupation, to convert and purify the souls of men. Yea, for this hour also be thousand thanks and praises cast at thy feet beneath the cross ! " Bless the Lord, O my soul ; and all that is within me, bless his holy name ! " As He, thy faithful Friend suffered, though blameless, in his inmost soul for thee, so do thou, O my soul, praise the Lord Jesus with all thy passions and affections ; and as he suffered in his holy body, so do thou praise him with all the members of thy body, and forget not the vast benefits he has bestowed on thee during this hour !

O Saviour ! I am bound to thee
 Each hour, each moment of my age ;
 Henceforth shall thy commands alone
 My powers of heart and flesh engage.

Alas ! I cannot accomplish much in this life, but this one thing grant me grace to do,—to keep thy sufferings and death perpetually before my mind, till I depart this life !

TWENTY-FIRST HOUR.

Friday, from 2 to 3, P. M.

MEDITATION.

OH, what a momentous hour was this, during which the eternal Word of the Father uttered such marvellous exclamations ; during which the Fountain of living waters suffers from parching thirst,—the self-existent Life dies on the cross ! Another hour had passed ; but the torment of the Son of God, the anguish of the curse, and the torture and agony of his body, were not yet relieved. He had yet to suffer, during this hour, the most excruciating pain in body and soul, and to wait for the help of his God, until he obtained a remission of it at the close of this period : If the previous hours of the sufferings of Jesus are most worthy of our attention, still more should it be the aim of every Christian to employ his thoughts upon this. Had not the result of this last hour of the life and sufferings of our surety been in our favour, had he not throughout this hour also persevered in his devotedness to our interests ; then should we poor sinners have been undone and hopeless, confirmed in our misery, and deprived, to all eternity, of every means of deliverance. But to what a glorious issue, in respect to our everlasting happiness, did his sufferings lead ! Oh, what praise and adoration will be paid him in heaven by the redeemed for their blissful consequences ! This was an hour, on which our redemption was suspended,—an hour, which shall be celebrated in glory by many millions of hallelujahs, when we attain to a right understanding of what the bloody, painful, meritorious, and victorious death of Jesus has procured for us. O that the Spirit of God may exhibit to our souls the atoning death of Christ, that we may even here most humbly glorify him in word and deed, and

hercafter praise him to all eternity. Matt. xxvii. 46—50.
 Luke xxiii. 46.

PRAYER.

Part 1. O our Mediator and Saviour, Bishop of our souls, now have thy most holy life, and meritorious sufferings reached the last hour. Every hour of thy life was spent for me, for my welfare, bliss and salvation. Ah ! would that I could say with truth, that I had spent all the hours of my life to thy honour, and according to thy will ! But, O thou omniscient Saviour, there is not one hour of my life, which I have as truly devoted to thee, as thou didst devote all the hours of thy life to me, and alas ! most of them have been entirely wasted. O Lord Jesus, may all the deficiencies of my life be made up by the merits of thine ! Yea, let all my past and future hours be atoned for by thy last hour, and grant me that, as a propitiation for all my life-time, I may be enabled to present thy last hour to thy Father ; for this is more agreeable and more pleasing to the Father than my life could have been, had I lived for a thousand years like a holy angel. From this most important and consolatory hour let a special blessing flow in upon each hour of my life, that henceforth I may live only to thee ! Yea, O Lamb of God, be my life devoted to thee, since thou hast deserved so much from me by thy bleeding wounds and agonizing death.

As, without doubt, thou hadst thy last hour ever in view, so grant that I may spend each hour as if it were the last ; and give me grace, that I may in no wise be afraid of it, but rather, having a childlike confidence in thine aid, and a certain hope of my perfect redemption, rejoice in the prospect of it : because thou hast removed all its terrors, and, in their stead, imparted a sweetness to it, which, however, can only be tasted by that faith, which through the influence of thy death smiles at its own.

From the narratives of the Evangelists we conclude, that through nearly the whole of this hour too, thou didst hang silently on the cross as during the preceding, and hast thus atoned for the guilt of all my sinfully impatient and mistrustful words, especially during afflictions, and procured me strength to avoid them in future. Nevertheless, in this hour also didst thou experience great anguish of mind, and great agony and pain of body, which thou didst express in these important words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" O Lord Jesus, how precious are these words to me! If thou hadst died in the previous period of silence, I should not have known that thou didst taste the bitterness of hell for me, and how great a source of consolation should I thus have lost! That thou didst speak with great sorrow and distress of mind is evident from the reiteration of the words, yet all that thou didst feel in pronouncing them is what no man on earth can describe. But, O my Redeemer, whensoever, either in life or in the article of death, I call upon thee out of the depths of anguish and perplexity, then hear thou my voice, and remember graciously thy sorrow of heart, and for its sake grant my soul deliverance, rest and peace.

Each word of thy complaint is of the greatest importance. Thou beginnest it with the sweet word "my," which enhances to me the value of the whole. Teach me also to commence all my prayers with the same, and thus realize thy Father to be my own, for it is to faith that thou hast an especial regard in all my prayers. On the cross thou callest nothing thy own but God, the supreme Good. Though thou willingly becamest poor, and gavest up all thy riches, thou wouldest not submit to be robbed of thy God. And although it appeared externally that even God had withdrawn himself from thee, and that thou wast upon the cross abandoned by Him likewise: yet thy

faith proved its unfailing power to lay hold of thy God by repeatedly uttering these words, "My God, my God." O let me enter this school, and diligently learn of thee to exercise faith ;—but, to this end, the aid of thy meritorious faith is indispensable.

The sweet name of "Father" is not at present on thy lips : thy Father was acting the part of an inexorable avenger towards thee, as the substitute of all mankind. Because thou stoodst in the place of rebels, thy Father appears to deal with thee, not as a father, but as a judge. And the change in the tenor of thy language, O Lord Jesus, in thy saying not "Father," but "God," may give me a further insight into the mystery of thy desertion, and lead me to meditate more correctly upon what thou didst experience. O grant me strength and grace to this end ! Again, this inquiry, "*Why* hast thou forsaken me?" is most worthy of consideration. The reason was well known to thee, but thy words were intended to teach me to put this question, and to inquire diligently for the cause, which led thee into such a state of suffering. Alas ! it was my sin, my twofold sin, in having first forsaken God, the fountain of living waters, and then hewed out for myself cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. And thou hast been forsaken of God, in order that I may be re-united with the Supreme Good. Again, thy word, "me," is emphatical. "*Why* hast thou forsaken *me*,"—me, thine only begotten and obedient Son,—me, the joy of thy heart, in whom thou hast ever been well pleased ? Ah, dear Redeemer, it was for no other reason than that thou wast my surety, and hadst engaged to redeem me, and all mankind from the curse and wrath of God,—from death and hell, that thou wast plunged into such a fiery pit of anguish. And, truly, no other being but thyself could have sustained such a terrific burden.

Lastly, the word, "forsaken," in thy complaint is a

most momentous, and inexpressibly terrible word for sinners. A deserted state is a most miserable one. To be wholly forsaken of men, destitute of aid and comfort, and left in a state of exposure to suffering, scorn, and shame, is most distressing ; but, together with all this, to be also forsaken by God,—is hell. From such a doom, O our Lord and God, deliver us ! How must it have added to thy grief, O dearest Jesus, that even thy complaint was turned into derision, and thy words misrepresented ! But in order to atone for all sorts of sin, and obtain for us all degrees of bliss, all kinds of suffering were commingled in thy cup. For this be thou praised for ever and ever, and O grant that sin may be very hateful to me, and that I may most jealously avoid it !

Part 2. O Lord Jesus, thou hadst to atone, on the cross, and in thy sufferings, for every variety of sin, therefore hadst thou to suffer, also, the most painful thirst. Alas ! my Saviour, it was no wonder that thou shouldst thirst, seeing that for nearly twenty-four hours not one drop had refreshed thy parched tongue, and fainting heart, and, besides this, thou hadst, within that time, poured out thy vital strength like water. The anguish of hell, the torment of the lost, the burning heat of divine wrath, had consumed thy vitals. O thou Spring of living water, how refreshing would a draught of any water have been to thee, but thou didst not obtain even so small a relief. I, a vile sinner, who deserve to drink for ever nought but the infernal pitch and brimstone, am now allowed to satisfy myself, not only with water, but also with many other pleasant beverages, but thou, the Creator of all things, hadst in vain to complain of thirst. O how much hadst thou thus to endure to atone for my voluptuousness, and how many soul-refreshing consolations hast thou thus obtained for me ! Grant, O Lord Jesus, that I may partake, with gratitude, of every draught which is intended

to quench my thirst, and afford me refreshment, since thou hadst to endure so much to obtain it for me ! For instead of cool and refreshing water thou wast mocked and tormented with a draught of vinegar and gall.

O may thy draught of gall allay
My thirst, no earthly means can stay ;
O may thy sprinkled blood sustain
My failing soul, when faint with pain ;
Through weakness when e'en sense is fled,
This nectar then upon me shed !

Hereby hast thou delivered me from the everlasting thirst, of which the rich man in hell complained, and from the pitch and brimstone of the bottomless pit.

Thy thirst, however, was not only corporeal, but also spiritual. Thy fainting heart was panting for consolation, peace, and heavenly refreshment. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth thy soul after the living God." Oh how many spiritual and everlasting dainties has the panting of thy spirit procured for me ! The precious draught of thy blood shall now refresh my parched soul. The pure water that issued from thy heart and side shall be in me a well of water springing up unto eternal life ; where from the crystal sea itself I shall be satisfied with heavenly bliss.

But thou wast also thirsting for my soul. Oh what a tender desire was glowing in thy heart after my salvation ! How eagerly did the warmth of thy love cause thee to pant after me ! Not only didst thou do and suffer all that the counsel of thy Father's love, and thy own love, had determined to be necessary to my salvation ; but thy soul was also deeply concerned, that I might participate in that purchased redemption, and that I might be made cordially willing to accept salvation from thee. Here was thy compassionate heart thirsting for souls to know from thee what sin is, so as to abhor the whole infernal brood, and with true repentance to return to thee,—for souls to be-

lieve on thee and thy cross with sincerity and truth, and to be cleansed from all their sins in thy precious blood,—for souls to love thee supremely and to devote their lives to thy praise. O my Saviour, how greatly wast thou concerned for my true welfare ; how much didst thou thirst after me ! May I now satisfy thy gracious longings by accepting thy salvation !

Oh that I may thirst after thee and thy blood, as thou art thirsting after me, even now on the throne of thy glory. Kindle all my desires after thee ! Grant that my heart may only thirst for thee, O Jesus, my delight ! May the longings of my soul for refreshment be satisfied only with thee ! May my understanding relish no study, so much as that of Jesus and his cross ! May Jesus, my beloved, alone move my affections, be the object of my contemplations, confirm my hope, excite my efforts, afford me peace, and be the principal and final aim of all my exertions !

Part 3. O Lord Jesus, after having tasted the vinegar and gall, what precious, consolatory words dost thou utter from the cross ! “ It is finished.” Thou refrainest from specifying what is finished, or how it has been finished, in order that I may the more diligently search for the meaning of this great truth. My soul would therefore enter with deep solemnity into the sanctuary of thy word, to be taught by thy Holy Spirit what is finished, and with brisk steps of faith would hasten to Golgotha to see how it has been finished. O my Redeemer, it is the great work of redemption, which thou didst undertake from motives of pure love ;—a work, which no creature, no, not all creatures with their combined strength could ever have accomplished. It is the work, on which the salvation of many millions of the human race, and my salvation also, depends ; the work, for the performance of which thy Father loves thee, agreeably to thy own words, “ Therefore doth my

Father love me, because I lay down my life ;” the great work, on account of which thou shalt be exalted, adored, loved, and praised through all eternity. This work is now completely finished, as completely as comports with the power and glory of such a divine and almighty Redeemer. All Scripture is fulfilled, a full salvation purchased, and all wrath turned into grace ; all enemies are vanquished, and all the demands of the law are satisfied ; hell is shut, and heaven is opened to believers ; and the handwriting, that was against us, cancelled and annulled, by thy cross, where a “ propitiation was made for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John ii. 2.)

“ It is finished !” Oh, what a precious word is this ! What a boldness may it impart to the grasp of faith ; what a staff and support for the soul to lean upon, and to enable it to vanquish all enemies, and baffle all accusers ! It is a paradise, where faith may find rich pasturage. Yea, it should be a watchword for all true Christians to use in encouraging one another. “ It is finished,” should sound along their ranks, and embolden every heart. O Lord Jesus, thou truly hast “ the tongue of the learned.” (Isaiah l. 4.) What a force and spirit is there in thy words. Thy disciple Peter certainly announced the truth, when he said, “ Lord, thou hast the words of eternal life.” Write this precious word with thy blood on my heart, that it may never be erased from my memory ! Grant that, amidst all the weakness of my spirit, I may rely with childlike confidence upon these words : whatever my works of faith and love may be, let me never build upon them, but only upon thy finished work ; yea, even in death may it be my anchor, to rely on in the midst of the tempest, by means of which I may safely reach the haven of a blissful eternity, where I shall be able to extol and praise thy name more satisfactorily for thy finished work of redemption. O Lord Jesus, as thou hast so perfected the work

of redemption on the cross, so let thy work, which thou hast commenced in my soul,—the work of repentance, faith, and sanctification, not be left incomplete. O thou all-powerful One, cease not until thou hast finished thy work in me, before the close of life. All the hindrances that exist in my heart thou canst turn into furtherances; for out of evil thou canst bring forth good. O thou perfect Redeemer, in my last struggle, put these words, “It is finished,” which on the cross thou didst speak in my behalf also, into my mouth, and present me acquitted through thy blood, and justified through thy perfect work of redemption, before the face of thy Father in peace. O thou wise Master-builder, leave not thy work unfinished; help me to watch, and pray, and overcome, till I stand complete before thy throne!

Part 4. Once more, O Lord Jesus, and for the last time thou openest thy sacred mouth, crying, with a loud voice, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” Now again do I hear thee pronounce the lovely name of Father; how sweet is the sound! Thy resumption of this mode of addressing thy God is a clear proof that thou hadst accomplished all his will, and fulfilled a perfect obedience to his commands, and hence thou couldst, with a loud voice, and great boldness, use the appellation of “Father.” Never could I have dared, with any assurance, to address God as my Father, did I not clothe myself in thy merits and perfect obedience; for, in myself, I am a very wicked, degenerate, and disobedient child. How blessed am I, in having thee to be my Mediator, whose interposition, to one so guilty, is quite indispensable. O Lord Jesus, nothing concerned thee at this time, but thy “spirit”—thy soul. May I also, whether in life or in death, have no greater concern than my soul, that I may rescue it from its deadly foes. Grant me this wisdom of the righteous; for if the soul is lost, all is lost. Since

thou, O Jesus, our blessed Head, art suspended on the cross, whosoever is a living member of thy mystic body, may, and should consider himself as crucified with thee. As our Head, thou also committest thy soul into the hands of thy Father, and therefore, with it, the souls of thy members ; for it is impossible for the members to be severed from the head. When I consider how my immortal spirit is surrounded here below with innumerable dangers, the thought may well fill me with anxiety, lest I should come short at last : but when I reflect that my spirit is along with thine in the hands of the Father, then may I well encourage my heart, and be assured of my salvation.

The first word, O Lord Jesus, recorded as spoken by thee agrees well with these thy last words. Then thou saidst, " Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business ? " And now, at the close of thy holy life thou resignest thy soul into the hands of thy Father. Oh sweet consistency ! As is thy life, so is thy death. Thy disposition is ever the same towards thy Father. Grant that I too, in life and death, may cling to thee, as thou didst to the Father. As I know not when, or by what means, my end may come, I surrender my soul, O my Saviour, at this moment into thy hands. I would not be in thy hands only in my dying hour, but also during my life-time ; otherwise I am not one moment secure from being swallowed up by the infernal wolf. Hide me, therefore, near thyself, in thy tabernacle,—in thy hands,—in thy wounds,—in thy heart,—in thy tender love ! And especially, O Jesus, enable me, at the hour of death, to entrust my soul to thee, by faith, with a childlike, cheerful, and triumphant hope !

Thy last word is spoken with a loud voice ; it may be correctly designated a shout of victory, as thy fourth exclamation, which was also uttered with a loud voice, was a

cry of complaint. Outward and inward darkness had both passed away ; thy Father's heart appeared again to thee full of grace and love ; thy enemies, save only the last, viz. death, were vanquished ; and thou wast now on the point of exchanging that lamentable scene of the cross for the glories of heaven. It may also be viewed as a call for aid, for death was just now piercing thy heart with its full power, and an unbroken sting ; which, however, thou wast just about to snatch from him. Thy conflict was with the last foe, who exerted all his power to overcome thee. This conflict is, in every case, supposed to be the most difficult, and to thee it was pre-eminently painful and severe. O Lord Jesus, may thy loud and last cry of victory and complaint support me in life, and plead mightily for me in the article of death. Grant that during my life I may often repeat it after thee, then will it be no loss to me, if even I should have no opportunity to do so in death ; because thy having spoken these words on my behalf is a safe plea for me. This word also thou spakest as my substitute, who wast standing in my room ; and having uttered them, thou didst immediately give up the ghost, thus sealing this word, as well as the other words spoken by thee on the cross, with thy redeeming blood.

Thou bowest thy head, and givest up the ghost. By faith, O my Redeemer, I offer thee my bosom to recline thy bowed head upon, that so I may the more affectionately embrace thy pale cheeks, and see how cruelly thou hast been treated. Though the colour of thy cheeks, and the redness of thy lips, are overspread by the paleness of death, yet even in death thy saving grace emits its lovely rays : even now art thou the fairest among the children of men, so that my soul can never be weary of gazing on thee, for in so doing it perceives more and more the wonders of thy love.

O my Life, thou art dying, and that for me, and for a

world of rebels, who have conspired against thy crown and throne, and treated thee with the most execrable baseness. What an unparalleled instance of love ! Thy death is real : I see it in thy closed eyes and mouth, and thou abhorrest dissimulation. Thou art dying voluntarily : one moment I hear thee utter loudly, and with great strength, thy last word ; and the next moment, thou layest down thy precious life, and resignest thy soul instead of mine, by a free and spontaneous act of love. Thou art dying a painful death, full of stripes and wounds. Thou art dying an ignominious death on the accursed tree like a criminal, who is worthy to be cut off from the earth. Thou art dying a bloody death : blood is trickling from thy many wounds. O Sun of righteousness, thou art setting in blood, yet thy setting is unspeakably beautiful, and ravishing to the soul. May the bright beams of thy crimson blood, glittering at thy setting, send their lustre into my heart ! As the natural sun at his setting is reflected in clear water, so may thy lovely evening crimson be reflected in my soul ! Thou art dying in accordance with the will of thy Father, for thou thyself hast clearly asserted that it was the will of the Father, that thou shouldst lay down thy life for the redemption of many. Thou art dying innocent, as the Lamb of God, bearing not thy own sins, but the sins of the world. Before, and at, and after thy death, many confirmations of thy innocence were given. For this reason thy death is meritorious also. As thy incarnation, and all the acts and sufferings of thy life were meritorious, so was thy death likewise a meritorious death. But thou art dying triumphantly, like a mighty hero, who has fought the battles of the Lord most gloriously, and has conquered all enemies, and made them the footstool of his feet. O Lord Jesus, what a wondrous death is thine ! Even before thy birth, it was said (Isa. ix. 6) that thy name should be called, “ Wonderful.” At thy advent into the world, mira-

culous events occurred, in respect to both thy conception and thy birth; during thy life, thy prophetic office was fulfilled by miracles of power and wisdom; and thy sufferings and death were equally miraculous. Wonders of wisdom, justice, holiness, omnipotence, and love, are manifest to the eye of faith in thy death, besides the many miracles in the natural world by which it was accompanied.

Part 5. O thou dying Saviour and Mediator! the people once bore witness to thee, that no man ever spake like thee; and, truly, no man ever died as, alas! thou didst. For thou wast the only man with whom God was ever well-pleased,—his Elect,—the first-born among many brethren,—the Head of thy whole church. Hence thou must have in all things the pre-eminence. Oh, how important and blessed should I esteem thy dying hour! How should all my thoughts and affections be engrossed by thy death. Never should it fade from my memory.

As rings the funeral toll,
Re-echoing far and wide;
May this resound through all my soul,
“For love my Jesus died.”

Yea indeed, for love,—for love thou didst die. Nothing but love brought thee into the world, and thy whole life may be briefly related in these words, “He lived and loved.”

O men! the love of Christ commend;
How ardent is the flame divine!
Stronger than death, it knows no end;
Unrivalled doth his goodness shine;
What fervour hath his love displayed,
By no deep floods of grief dismayed!

O Lord Jesus, during my whole life-time, but especially in the hour of death, may thy death contribute to my welfare, as being well-attested, and willing, yet painful, ignominious, and bloody, and, moreover, meritorious, victorious, and wonderful, and inspired by love. That thou, my

blessed Head, didst truly die, is a fact of the greatest importance to me. Did I not certainly know this great truth, I should, through fear of death, be all my life-time subject to bondage, (Heb. ii. 15) and all the consolation I derive from thy death, whether in life, or in death, would be lost. That thou didst die willingly for me, makes me also now willing to die. Grant that I may not be too firmly attached to life, but be every moment ready to resign it : and let me not be ready to die, from a weariness of life, but from a holy desire to see thee, and to be with thee.

True believers must be willing
To encounter death and pain ;
Through thy peace on me dislulling,
May I such a heart obtain ;
May my spirit
Ne'er be fearful or complain !

Thy painful death, O Lord Jesus, be my consolation in all my sufferings, in life or death. May my feeling be this,

With Jesus' afflictions and death in my view,
My weightiest griefs appear trifling and few.

May the remembrance of thy sufferings make me ashamed of my self-indulgence, and grant thou me from the cross as much patience as I require. That thou didst die ignominiously causes my death to be precious in the sight of God. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Ps. cxvi. 15. And this, certainly, is solely, O thou well-spring of all holiness, on account of thy death. If my death be but precious in thy sight, then it is a small matter for it to be in poverty or contempt in the eyes of the world. If, on my death-bed, I be attended by friends who esteem and love me, I shall be indebted for the blessing only to the merits of thy ignominious death on the accursed tree. Alas ! what a mournful, torturing place was allotted thee to die ! O my Redeemer, what a comfort is it to me, that thy death was a bloody

death ! Thence I am assured that it was an atoning death, for without shedding of blood is no remission. O Lord Jesus, deeply do I need the merits of atoning blood, both in life and death.

May Jesus' precious blood
 Sin's frightful stains efface ;
 And deck me for Christ's marriage feast,
 T'ensure my soul a place.

May thy blood be my refreshment, my ransom, my strength, my robe of righteousness, my all in all at the hour of death. Thou art dying an innocent death, and givest thy precious life, as an expiation of my guilt. While I infold myself in the robe of thy innocence, and lay hold on thy redemption, how fiercely soever the devil, the world, the law, or conscience may accuse me, I send them to thee my surety, and am quite freed from their accusations. Thy death was in accordance with the will of thy Father. What a confidence towards God may this afford me, in life and death ! How clearly do I perceive in this the Father's tender love, which surrendered thee, his only-begotten Son, to the most ignominious death for me. Lord Jesus, grant therefore that my death may also be according to thy will ; keep me from any act or habit that would shorten my own life ; and direct thou all the circumstances of my life in such a manner, that I may have the satisfaction of dying in a mode consistent with thy will. Thy death is a victorious death. Thou dost not appear like a vanquished combatant, or a dismayed hero, but advancest with the greatest boldness to encounter death, and thus extractest, for thy followers, all the poison of its sting. O my Saviour, who knowest my great weakness, grant me also courage, and gladness, and triumph in death. Yea, may thy conquest, and thy victorious strength plead for me, and console my heart in every exigency. From thy wondrous death I may draw this inference, that thou possessest a Divine, as well as human,

nature. Therefore I commit myself to thy care, in fullest confidence that thou wilt do for me whatever is essential to my well-being, and wilt bring me wonderfully through every difficulty. Lastly, O my dearest friend, thou diest out of love,—out of pure, and faithful, and saving, and incomparable love. Grant that nothing may be a more delightful subject of meditation to me than this, that thou, the good Shepherd, didst lay down thy life for the sheep. Yea, may that love which constrained thee to lay down thy life for me, be my joy in suffering, and my strength in weakness, and when my time arrives to lie down in peace, then let thy loving faithfulness enable me to enter with confident assurance into thy kingdom. Create in me, through thy death, true repentance, living faith, and assured hope. And when my last hour approaches, O Lord Jesus, then be thou at hand to plunge me once more in thy blood to complete my adornment, and so fit me to pass through the vale of death to the participation of thy glory. Let me die infolded in thy arms, receiving peace from thy wounds, and reposing on thy heart! May thy giving up the ghost sanctify my last breath, that I may breathe out my soul in most intimate fellowship with thee. Amen!

TWENTY-SECOND HOUR.

Friday, from 3 to 4, P. M.

MEDITATION.

WHOSOEVER would wish to take another view of the Lamb of God before his interment, must seize the opportunity afforded by this hour. The centurion did not leave the vicinity of the cross without a blessing, nor shall any attentive and humble spectator. Whosoever would wish to bathe himself yet again in the blood of Jesus, must do so now ere the earth drinks it up.

What wonders happen at the Saviour's death ! The veil of the temple is torn asunder, the earth quakes, the rocks are rent, many graves are opened and give up their dead : the centurion, and others with him, who were standing near the cross, when they saw what happened, were much afraid, and confessed Jesus to be " a righteous man," and " the Son of God." Many others returned to Jerusalem striking upon their breasts in token of sorrow. Many pious women also, who were Jesus' friends, were present to view the death of the Prince of Life, and the miracles which attended it. With what emotions they witnessed them may easily be imagined, and therefore no account of them is on record. Lastly, with a spear they open the side of our already so much wounded Lover, whereupon came out blood and water.

Arise, my soul ! and let this hour be abundantly profitable to thee through the influence of the love of Jesus. Let his emaciated form be deeply imprinted on thy heart ! Let the wonders, that accompanied his death, penetrate thy soul ! Thou hast yet but a small space of time to gather profit from thy Redeemer's blood : now is it the last hour that it is flowing,—the last hour that thy Friend hangs on the fatal cross. Arise, then, without delay ! Hold still some confidential intercourse with thy Friend, and strive to secure as much benefit as possible beneath his cross ! Matt. xxvii. 51—56. Mark xv. 38—41. Luke xxiii. 47—49. John xix. 31—37.

PRAYER.

Part 1. O my Mediator, made perfect through sufferings ! thou hast now delivered thy ever-faithful spirit into the hands of thy Father. Thy soul had both laboured and suffered, in a manner and degree beyond all human comprehension, until the last breath. Now, it has rested from all its labours, and truly may it be said of thee, that thy works have followed thee. Yea, we, thy redeemed, are

the work of thy hands, which thou wilt not forsake, for thou hast thyself said for our comfort, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." O how gladly do I witness this rest to thy precious soul, which had been devoted to suffering in my stead. How do I rejoice that it is now delivered from the dungeon of anguish, and enjoys never-ending repose. With what tender feelings must thy Father, satisfied by thy death, have received it, in answer to thy petition! What a shout of victory must have resounded through the whole of the heavenly realms upon the arrival of thy pure and perfect spirit, in celebration of thy newly-earned victories! How sublime the praises, which were presented to thee, in deepest, humblest adoration, by all angels, and the redeemed saints above! Amen! to thee, the once slaughtered Lamb, be all praise, glory, and honour throughout all eternity! Lord Jesus, through the merits of this thy triumphant entry into the world above, grant that my spirit also, when separated from the body, may enter into eternity with gladness, and be received in peace!

How precious is thy death in the sight of God, and by how great wonders is it accompanied! The veil of the temple, which was of so great strength and thickness, was torn asunder. Up to the time of thy death, it had concealed the most holy place, but this was now no longer requisite, since the Most Holy had been opened by thee, and free entrance into it by faith procured for every repenting sinner. Now have we freedom to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus. The earth quaked, as if to express sympathy with the martyr death of her Creator. Alas! O Lord Jesus, lifeless creation is not so slow to be moved by thy death, as are men who are so deeply interested in it. O shameful indifference! How often have I read of thy death, or heard of it, or meditated upon it, and my heart remained quite unmoved. How cold and

insensible is my heart to the subject of thy great love ! O let some fire of thy saving love be conveyed from the altar of thy cross to my heart, that a pure flame may be enkindled there, and its disposition be so changed, that it may love thee as thou deservest.

The graves also were opened, and many saints rose and came forth, to be witnesses that thy death had swallowed up our death, and triumphed over it. Oh, let me, in life and death, enjoy this invaluable result of thy death ! O that all who are spiritually dead may be raised by it to life, brought forth out of their graves of sin, and made capable of walking in newness of life ! Again, a notable miracle was exhibited in the rocks, which were rent at the time of thy death. Already have unnumbered hearts, hard as rocks, been broken by the power of thy death, and O may the same saving work be wrought on multitudes besides ! O Lord Jesus, break up the stony rocky ground, which yet exists in my heart too ! Soften my heart by the influence of thy blood, and make it like soft clay, ready to be moulded into any form, that is agreeable to thy will ! But not on inanimate nature alone were wonders wrought on occasion of thy death : they were exhibited likewise in the people, who witnessed it, in their smiting on their breasts, to evince their deep regret ; and especially in the centurion and his associates, in their giving such a glorious testimony to thy innocence and divinity, in these words, “ Verily, this was a righteous man,”—“ the Son of God.” O Lord Jesus, wherever the news of thy atoning death is proclaimed, there let wonders still be achieved in the hearts of men, through which God may be praised, and thou glorified in thy propitiatory sacrifice !

Part 2. O my Redeemer, thy spirit is now at rest, but thy mangled body hangs still on the cross to suffer yet further ill-treatment. O my wounded, bleeding Saviour, though already scourged, and pierced with thorns and

nails, thou even yet allowest thy side to be opened by a spear. Already hast thou shed streams of precious blood, and yet more blood flows on thy being pierced by the spear. Already hast thou been poured out like water, (Ps. xxii. 14) and still thou pourest the residue from thy pierced heart upon the earth. O my Redeemer, thy love is altogether beyond description; thou withholdest not even a drop either of water or of blood, which is not shed for our redemption.

Through thy wounds, dear Lamb, there gushes
Faithfulness, portrayed in blood :
Eager here the thirsty rushes :
Vile, he bathes him in this flood ;
Make me thirsty ;
Lord, supply me with thy blood !

All, all is paid as the price of our ransom, even to the last drop of thy blood. O earth, cover not this blood, before I have taken advantage of it. Methinks I hear thy sweet lips, though pale and death-like, whisper to me,

Man ! love hath cleft my side for thee ;
Thy fountain's opened ; hither flee !

And my soul replies,

Yes ! O my Friend, I see the tide
Of water streaming from thy side ;
Here let me bathe, and gladly find
Thy blood a solace to my mind.

I see blood and water flowing from thy side, a twofold mystic stream, representing in the most lovely manner the two institutions of the New Testament, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. O ye floods, gushing from the heart and side of Jesus, fill me with your blessed excellencies, to the honour of my dearest Friend. Shall I be satisfied with a few scant drops of blessing, when the fulness of blessing is proffered for my acceptance? "Without price," exclaims the voice of my Friend;—without price am I permitted to drink,—without price to immerge in this sea of love. Thy desire is that I should abundantly profit by

these streams of life, nor is it less my desire to refresh myself with them. Open thou my mouth wide by faith, and fill it with these waters of life ! May the pure water, which flowed from thy heart, together with the Holy Spirit's power, renew me to eternal life, and "purify my conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

Now, O my Redeemer, fulfil in me that promise, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." Let the blood from thy dear heart, which from eternity yearned over me in love, cleanse my body and soul ! O my Redeemer, what a fountain of blood,—what a sea of love, do I behold beneath thy cross !—a sea of blood, full of goodness and mercy ! May I have boldness, O my Jesus, to plunge in its depths ! Grant me this favour, for it was shed for sinners. Thy Spirit cries unto me, "O thou of feeble mind, come to this blood, and by faith partake of its saving efficacy. The heritage belongs to thee ; hesitate not to receive it." O Lord, I prostrate myself, therefore, before thy cross ; pour thy stream of life upon my soul and body, and cleanse them ; write thy name upon my heart, that henceforth I may love nothing supremely but Jesus alone. Nay, plunge me so entirely into this flood, that all guilty fears may subside, and I may possess and enjoy thy full salvation.

O Lord Jesus, the sick often expend much money in resorting to curative baths, but here the most excellent of all may be used gratuitously, viz. thy precious blood, which is a remedy for all diseases. How needful is this bath of grace for me, since nothing can heal my sickness but thy blood ! Here is the true antitype of the pool of Bethesda : O that all the spiritually diseased may descend into it by faith. Here also are five porches, viz. thy wounds, O slaughtered Lamb ! But, oh, what matter for deepest regret, that bodily sickness awakens men's attention so much more than the sickness of the soul, owing

to the perversion of the heart. The pool of Bethesda was only moved at intervals, and one man only was healed on each occasion ; but this pool of blood is perpetually moved, for it is pervaded by love, and love knows of no cessation in seeking the welfare of its objects. Moreover, all the diseased, who long for healing, can enter into it every day, every hour, yea, every moment, and there is room enough for all. How many millions of the spiritually sick have already become whole 'under thy cross, and how many others might have become whole, if they had only been willing. O make me wise by others' loss. But, O my Redeemer, I am like the man at Bethesda, who had lain thirty-eight years sick, so completely impotent that I need to be lifted into this pool of life : may thy good Spirit, therefore, direct and assist me, else I shall never partake of its benefits.'

O my Saviour, thy blood is an ocean, abounding with most precious pearls, which can enrich and bless all mankind in time and eternity. O God, may my soul esteem them very highly, and may I appropriate them, by faith, for my salvation. I would amass a rich treasure of them, in which to appear decked and beautiful before God and angels.

Part 3. O my Lord Jesus, the time has now arrived, that thou art to be taken down from the cross. But ere this be done, I would wish to profit yet once more by the sight of thy lamentable figure. By faith do I climb thy cross, and embrace thee my Life, until thy glory is manifested to my soul, and my heart, freed from anguish, experiences the salutary power of thy blood and death. Yea, I embrace thee with the ardour of faith and love in my bosom.

To thee I cling, O paschal Lamb, to thee,
To thine atonement on the fatal tree,
To thy deep wounds I cling, and gasping breath,
Thy piteous cries, and agonizing death.

Mine are thy merits, mine thy precious blood :
 Immortal life is in the crimson flood :
 How vast my treasures are ! How blest my station
 On Calvary near thee, O my Salvation !

So let all that is within me, be dyed and coloured with
 thy blood, while I embrace thee, and take my leave of
 thee, my dearest Jesus.

Although my soul is wed by grace
 To Christ, the crucified,
 'Tis but by faith I now embrace
 My Jesus, though his bride :
 Oh, there shall be my full delight,
 Where nought shall veil him from my sight.

But I have still much occupation for faith and love in
 viewing thy heart now cleft for me. Thou didst allow
 the soldier to open it, that I might see into it, and per-
 ceive what an admirable, loving heart it is. O thou Light
 of the world, let one spark from thy eyes, which glitter
 with love, reach my weak spiritual eyes, yea, anoint them
 with blood from thy pierced heart, that the natural scales
 may fall off, and that I may see thy heart clearly, and
 know it fully.

I find thy heart, O my God, to be truly the heart of a
 friend, which has given me, in living, suffering, and dying,
 unnumbered proofs of faithfulness, and seals of cordial
 friendship. Thou art not such a friend as to abandon
 thy friends in time of need : no, thou givest thy all, even
 to thy life and soul, for thy friends,—yea, more, thy life
 thou givest for thy enemies. Further, thou possessest the
 heart of a brother : thou art bone of our bone, and flesh
 of our flesh ; and although thy kinsmen are but poor,
 needy and sinful, yet thou art “ not ashamed to call them
 brethren,” but wilt appear, in the last day, with them in
 that capacity before all the holy angels. But yet further,
 thy heart, O my Redeemer, is the heart of a father. A
 pious father uses his utmost exertions to procure his chil-
 dren’s temporal and eternal happiness, so dost thou like-

wise. Thy daily intention is to save souls, by drawing them to thyself. A father has no greater sorrow, than to have disobedient children, and no greater joy, than to witness their obedience ; and such are the emotions of thy paternal heart. As a father pitieth his children, so dost thou pity those that fear thee. I recognize in thy heart the heart of a faithful Shepherd also. Thou providest the best pasturage for thy sheep ; thou watchest over and keepest them day and night, and ledest them out and in : yea, thou hast come from heaven for this, that they may have life, and all the fulness of blessing. So highly dost thou esteem thy redeemed sheep, that, if any one of them goes astray, thou dost not cease until thou hast found it, and brought it back on thy shoulders to the flock.

Good my Shepherd is, and kind ;
He my roving heart inclined ;
Brought me, as his lamb, to rest
On his tender, loving breast.

E'en his weakest lambs declare,
Ever faithful is His care ;—
No such other can they find ;—
Good my Shepherd is, and kind.

Lord Jesus, thy heart is like the tender heart of a mother. As a mother cares for her children from their earliest infancy, so hast thou borne us, according to thine own words, Isa. xlv. 3. And as a mother nurses her child in her bosom, so are thy weeping children satisfied with the sweet milk of consolation on thy breast of grace. As an affectionate mother unweariedly tends her child, and carefully supplies all its necessities, manifesting the greatest patience, so dost thou also for thy children, with more than a mother's tenderness, and in the most effectual manner.

And, lastly, to comprise all in one word : thou hast the heart of a true Jesus—a true Saviour ; for from thy heart has proceeded whatever at any time we have tasted of

love. The interpretation of thy name, Jesus, is to be found in the disposition of thy heart. Thine is the heart of a Saviour, a Deliverer, a Redeemer ; it overflows with saving love ; it was broken in the act of delivering mercy ; it was pierced in the exercise of redeeming grace. Thy love, O Jesus, is of such a length, breadth, height, and depth, that we can discover continually more and fresh wonders in it ; but only in eternity shall we know the full riches of thy heart, the treasury of divine love. O Lord Jesus, when thou preferrest the demand, " My son,—my daughter,—give me thy heart," I reply, " O my Saviour, take my heart, despise it not ; accept it, I desire, in the best way I can, to surrender it to thee."

But as I must still, of necessity, have a heart, I pray thee, O Jesus, give me thine ! When thou allowest thy disciples to inter thee, then leave me thy heart, and take mine along with thee to the grave. The transgressions of my heart thou hast once taken on thyself, now take then my entire heart, or unite it, by faith and love, in joy and sorrow, life and death, in such a manner with thine own, that thou and I may become one heart and one soul : yea, melt my heart into one with thine, that neither height nor depth, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any creature may separate me from thy love !

A nimble-winged dove were I,
Without delay to thee I'd fly,
To shelter in thy wounded side :
No splendid throne my choice should sway,
No lordly castle tempt my stay,
In thee, my cloven Rock, I'd hide.

Vain men ! who lofty towers erect,
With marble, gems, and gold bedeckt :
To Calvary's nobler height I'll go,
On love's unlettered wings I'll fly,
To see my life's great Author die,
From whose cruel cross my comforts flow.

TWENTY-THIRD HOUR.

Friday, from 4 to 5, P. M.

MEDITATION.

DURING this hour, the preparation for the burial of Jesus took place. His heavenly Father, who regarded him, even in death, as his beloved Son, so ordered it, that his holy, mangled body should be laid in a decent grave, and raised up righteous men, who felt it to be their duty to convey the corpse of the slain Lamb to its resting-place. Joseph of Arimathæa, a rich, and (which is a far more honourable distinction) a righteous man, and a disciple of Christ, had the courage to go to Pilate, and beg the body of Jesus, and Pilate granted his request. Then Joseph bought linen to wrap it in. Nicodemus also came, bringing a hundred pounds weight of myrrh and aloes to embalm the body, according to the custom of the Jews. Such love did these two honoured men shew at this hour towards their adorable Lord, and put many others to shame.

Arise, my soul, and be not, at this hour, behind these illustrious disciples, but, by faith, in spirit, imitate their example. The lovely Redeemer, of his own pure love, died for thee. He so loved thee, as to cost him his life ; therefore shouldst thou also manifest thy love to him by a suitable regard to his death. And if thou canst not do as these men did, then do what thou canst, and it shall be acceptable to the Redeemer, who died for thee. Mark xv. 42, 43. John xix. 39, 40.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus, my life, as thou hast now been hanging for a while, lifeless, on the cross, and I have not departed from thee ; so I will, by thy grace, continue this hour also near thee. And would to God, that I might daily, by

faith, derive much benefit from this hour. Grant me the needful grace from thy cross, for without thee I can do nothing.

Thou art hanging a prize, as it were, for every man's competition. Many a person might have obtained thee, had he wished to do so, and had the boldness to ask for thee. But alas ! where are the souls, that cherish such a holy desire ? How rare are they ! If a man of wealth or rank die, people are immediately ready to provide for his interment ; but thou art hanging upon the fatal tree uncared for, as if contemptible and unworthy of regard. Pilate knows not that thou art dead, and others, who had been present at thy death, and had seen thee expire, have gone away. There thou hangest, forsaken and alone, yet the most deserving of affectionate care of any corpse, that ever was, or ever shall be seen on earth. Does no one think of extracting the nails from thy flesh, or washing off the blood, or even taking thee from the cross ? Then, O my Saviour, by faith I will do it in spirit. I will pull out the nails from thy holy wounds, and use them to pierce and crucify my carnal nature. I will extract the thorns from thy sacred head, and wipe off the blood with tears of repentance and love. I will embalm thy ill-treated body with the myrrh of a true contrition and humility, and with the spices of faith and love. Thy righteousness and holiness, which thou hast bestowed on me, shall be the white linen in which I will wrap thee up : for truly nothing, which I can call my own, is pure or clean. All that is in me, or belongs to me, is polluted ; yea, even my best works are stained with sin.

But what I have done only in spirit, Joseph and Nicodemus did in reality, and, with cordial affection, took the tenderest care of thee after thy death. Joseph certainly incurred some risk in the part he took, as is intimated in the words, " He went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved

the body of Jesus." O my Saviour, I have not to run such risk, by asking for thee from a heathen judge : I have to repair to thy reconciled Father, where I know, before presenting my petition, that I shall not be rejected. Joseph valued the gift of thy torn and lifeless body, because he knew how to appreciate thee. Grant that I too may value thee as the richest gift of heaven, which is indispensable to my well-being, but which I can obtain only by pure, undeserved favour. O that this may be the real feeling of my heart,

" Not only thy gifts do I crave ;
O Jesus, thyself must I have."

But, alas ! how often do I experience very contrary feelings to these ? Grant me, then, such a fervent love, that I also may say, as Asaph did, " Whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is none upon earth, that I desire beside thee."

These two devout men were thy disciples only in secret during the period of thy earthly love : their love was concealed under the ashes of the fear of man ; but now, when thou wast dead, it broke out at once into a bright flame, and put even thy publicly avowed disciples to shame. Ah, Lord Jesus, when shall the blessed time come, that the spark of my affection, which is oft hidden from view by my imperfections, shall break out also into a flame of love towards thee ? Thou hast deserved so much of me, the vilest of sinners, that my love ought indeed to surpass that of all men ; but, alas, how different is the case ! Thou knowest how much many others exceed me in love to thee, and put me to shame.

Lord ! 'tis my sorrow and complaint
To feel my love so cold and faint :
I grieve to make thee such return ;
With shame, and then with love, I burn
And still the more affection glows,
My debt of love yet larger grows.

But I must indeed confess to thee, that my coldness and want of love to thee do not even cause a genuine grief in me, and this is yet far more grievous.

O Lord Jesus, may the preparation for thy burial sanctify the preparation for mine. In what poverty didst thou die, so that thou hadst not even a cloth to be covered with, nor money to purchase it. In this way thou hast indeed sanctified the poverty of thy believers, which prevails in many instances to the same degree. Should I too be called to die thus poor, which I cannot be sure of escaping, still let it but be in thy sweet fellowship, and it will be no injury to me. As Joseph and Nicodemus generously bore the necessary expenses of thy interment, so let me be ready to expend my property for thee, in thy poor believers. Eradicate from my heart that cursed covetousness, which is a root of all evil !

Now, therefore, O my Saviour, allow thyself to be embalmed, and wound up in linen, and made ready for the tomb, that before evening thou mayest be laid in thy resting-place. Every scene through which thou passest is meritorious, and advantageous to me. Thy love to me, a helpless sinner, is even now actively engaged in securing my eternal salvation.

O spotless Lamb, on that dread tree,
 Thy blood and life atoned for me :—
 Thy love out-measures praise,
 God's chosen Lamb ! who's like to thee ?
 My life, and strength, and wealth shall be
 Thy tribute all my days.

Thy title, O my Jesus, I will take from thy cross, and keep in my heart for a perpetual memorial to remind me who thou art, and that thou art mine.

TWENTY-FOURTH HOUR.

Friday, from 5 to 6, P. M.

MEDITATION.

Now follows the burial of our most blessed Redeemer. He possessed no sepulchre of his own. For as, in accordance with his own words, he had no place, where he might lay his head during life, so had he, also, no place, where his body might be laid in death. But it was expedient that he should receive a decent burial, as well to sanctify our graves, as to be a witness to the real character of his death, and to afford him appropriate honour. For these reasons he was to be laid in a rich man's grave. Now, near the spot where he was crucified was a garden, and in the garden, a new tomb, which Joseph had hewn out in a rock, and here they laid Jesus, because of the preparation-day of the Jews, for the Sabbath was at hand, and the tomb was nigh. They rolled also a great stone to the door of the grave, and the Jewish rulers sealed the stone, and even set a watch before it, to prevent his body being taken away by his disciples, as the people feared. Truly, this is a momentous hour. We have contemplated many hours of our Saviour's sufferings, but we have only one hour of his burial; and we should, therefore, the more carefully redeem this hour, and profit by it. All that happened to the Prince of Life during this hour, was for our everlasting benefit. Whoever wishes to participate in that benefit, need only occupy his mind with frequent meditations on this topic, and he will find by happy experience, what a blessing the burial of Jesus can convey to his heart. Matt. xxvii. 59—66. Mark xv. 46, 47. Luke xxiii. 53—56. John xix. 41, 42.

PRAYER.

Part 1. O thou slain Lamb of God, who bearest the sins of the world, thou art now borne to the tomb. Thy

attractive power draws me after thee, and I will accompany thee, my deceased best Friend, and see where thou art laid ; even should I be conducted to the grave itself, to which nature has so strong an aversion. They carry thee into a garden. In a garden human guilt had its origin, and in a garden didst thou bury it. In a garden we forfeited life, and deserved death, and in a garden hadst thou to lie as dead. Let me, when I walk or sit in the garden, think often, for my profit, of the 'garden of Olives, of thy interment in a garden, and, likewise, of my own grave. They laid thee in another's grave, because neither in life nor in death hadst thou any dwelling-place of thy own. Grant that thy voluntary poverty may be the procuring cause of my spiritual and everlasting riches ! O thou sweet Jesus, thou hadst to become in all things like unto thy brethren : therefore thou also enteredst the grave. Who else could have sanctified my tomb, and made it a sweet resting-place, but thou, the Most Holy ? Who could have gone with comfort into the darksome grave, to be buried therein, if Thou hadst not lain in it ?

Oh, how gladly do I welcome this repose to thy wearied limbs, after the great toil and pain, which my sins have occasioned thee,—after the severe conflict with my enemies, which has terminated so gloriously to my infinite gain, in time and in eternity,—after the extreme agony and innumerable sufferings, the torture and blood-shedding, with which thy life has closed,—yea, in short, after thy toilsome life, which was one continued series of sufferings. Rest now in peace, and even in thy death be thou my life, and in thy grave my treasure and the all-sufficient Portion of my soul ! I draw nigh to thy dark grave, as Moses drew near to the thick darkness, where Jehovah was. Exodus xx. 21. Even in the gloomy grave, thou art still "the light of the world." Here, in the tomb, will I tell thee all my complaints, and pour out my whol

heart before thee, for here the world does not hear me, and will not hold me up to scorn. Here will I also anoint thee, O my Saviour, with tears of repentance, faith and love, and will a thousand times pay at thy feet the homage of my gratitude for all thy faithfulness evinced towards me. Even here thy lovely form shall ravish my heart ; for thou wast, and continuest evermore to be the fairest among the children of men. Though thy lips are closed, yet thy heart is freely open to me : through thy opened side I can look upon it, and read what thy dear lips would have spoken to me.

Though thou art not now apparently labouring for my salvation, but thy limbs are resting, yet even thy rest is the vigorous diligence of love : for by it thou securest to me repose in the grave, and causest it to be a peaceful, and even sacred resting-place, divested of all frightful or terrific associations.

Oh, what a happy privilege this,
To have my tomb a temple made !
When from the grave Christ rose to bliss,
His glory sanctified its shade.

Yea, what is still more, thou takest all my sins along with thy sinless body, which thou hadst offered up as a propitiation, into the grave, so that they may disappear entirely, and for ever, from before the face of thy Father.

Thou art he that comforts me ;
Thou from hell hast set me free
All the sins, by which I've erred,
Now are in thy grave interred ;
There thou hast my guilt concealed,
There from view for ever sealed.

For this reason, thou allowest them, moreover, to seal up the tomb, as a token of the fulfilment of the promises, " Seventy weeks are determined to seal up sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness," and, " In those days, and in

that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none ; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." (Dan. ix. 24, margin, and Jerem. i. 20.)

Part 2. O my Saviour, what privileges, treasures, and blessings flow to me from thy burial ! Grant that I may realize them all by the exercise of faith ! Prevent me, O Lord Jesus, from ever disinterring the dead carcass of sin, which it cost thee so much 'to bury. Shall I be so unwise as to seek out a carcass, that has been interred. Forbid it, O my Saviour. Let sin, of which thou hast received the due penalty, now perish with shame, nor let any thing now avail to subject me again to its service. Grant that I may cherish more and more enmity against sin, and let me, by the merits of thy burial, die to it day by day. Make it, O thou mighty Saviour, less and less influential in my soul ; and whatever I may yet feel, from day to day, of its enticements, let it waken true repentance, and be met by faith on the merits of thy burial, that it may not prevail to my injury, and, through the merits of thy burial, as well as of all thy other deeds and sufferings, may not be imputed to me.

Thy grave is a true paradise, where my soul finds exalted delights. Thou art in it as the tree of life, for even in death thou art life, and bearest in thy grave the fruits of immortality. Grant that I may with eagerness partake of them ! Thy grave is a field, in which the hidden treasure lies. (Matt. xiii. 44.) O thou dearest Jesus, a treasure above all treasures, let me " esteem all but loss, that I may win thee, and be found in thee." Thy grave is a couch, on which, as a wearied lamb, thou art resting until the morning of thy resurrection, and for me also is it a resting-place, wherein I may keep a quiet sabbath. Thy grave was an honourable one, for thy interment, which was the termination of thy sufferings, was

according to the promise and prophecy, Isaiah xi. 10, "His rest shall be glorious," and whilst thou wast reposing in the earth, thou wast preparing an honourable resting-place for all thy believing people. Should they even be buried in a place or mode considered ignominious by the world, it must nevertheless be honourable to them for the sake of thy interment. Thy grave is likewise a pleasant grave. Nothing of fear or terror is connected with it, but sweet, consoling pleasure to all who take delight in thee. Thy grave is an open grave. Although closed by the Jews with a stone and seal, it is nevertheless open to all believers: they can reach it daily by a spiritual pilgrimage, and entering it, can "see the place where the Lord lay." Lastly, it is also an empty grave; because thou, the Prince of life, couldst not be detained by the bonds of death, but didst rise to an incorruptible and endless life.

O Lord Jesus, since thou canst make the grave, in itself dark and dismal, so lovely a place by thy presence; I beseech thee, let my heart be thy grave. Prepare it for thyself, as an unoccupied tomb, by removing every thing from it, which displeases thee, or constitutes an objection to thy possessing it. Make it like a new grave. Thou thyself hast said, "Behold, I make all things new:" do this, then, with regard to my heart: so operate on me by thy Holy Spirit, that thou mayest be able to say of me, "Old things have passed away: all things have become new." Make my heart, O my Redeemer, a beautiful paradise. Let it be thy enclosed garden, full of pleasant fruits. If but thou, the Tree of life, stand in the midst, then will it be a paradise indeed. O sweet Lamb of God, would that my heart were still and silent like the grave, that thou mightest rest there, and I might keep the true Sabbath of the soul! But, alas! what an unsteady heart is mine! How fiercely, oftentimes, do its corrupt affections, inclina-

tions, and desires contend one against another ! What a tumult of worldly anxieties is often there ! How do my spiritual enemies fight and war ! Alas, O Lord Jesus, it frequently resembles the stormy sea, " which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." None can pacify it but thou, O tranquil Lamb of God. Therefore,

Grant me the purpose, power, and will,
To be at all times calm and still.

Do thou, who canst appease the roaring sea, grant to my conscience to enjoy sweet, spiritual repose !

Dearest Jesus, pour thy name, as precious ointment, into my heart, that it may pervade every chamber of my soul with its fragrance, and expel the abominable odour of my sins, then wilt thou be pleased to dwell there. O my Saviour, a soul loved by thee, thou namest " Hephzibah." Grant me this name and privilege : make me such as thou canst thyself take pleasure in. Preserve my heart from every evil, which is displeasing in thy sight. Preserve my understanding from all the power of darkness, my will from slavish fear and discord, my memory from forgetfulness of thy love and thy will. Preserve my affections from all sinful revolt ; and my inclinations and desires from seeking any thing which is contrary to thine own nature. Preserve my thoughts from wanderings and distractions, my senses from attachment to the world, and my members from becoming instruments of unrighteousness. Moreover, preserve and keep that good which has been wrought in me by thine own hand, that no enemy may rob me of it. So let me be safely kept by thy almighty power to everlasting bliss !

CONCLUSION.

AND now, O my Redeemer, what praises shall I offer thee, at the close of the day, for the ineffable wonders of

love, which thou hast wrought during these twenty-four hours, which have been the subject of my meditations ;—for the whole work of redemption ;—for thy entire holy, meritorious life, from the manger to the grave ;—for thy suretiship ;—for all thy toils and sufferings ;—for thy reconciling and atoning death, and for thy burial ? O Lord Jesus, all is so vastly important, so invaluable and indispensable, that I cannot appreciate it as I ought, nor praise thee for it as I should. Here, in the state of weakness, we require the power of the Holy Ghost to aid us ; and there, in the state of undying youth and vigour, the duration of a blissful and sinless eternity, to praise thee worthily.

O Lord Jesus, I am at a loss where to begin thy praises, or for what proof of thy love to adore thee first. Yet will I now commence, in great imperfection, what I shall be able to do hereafter more perfectly.

Praise and adoration be to thee, O Jesus, Lamb of God, who hast quenched the flame of Divine wrath by thy blood upon the cross ! Blessing and glory in the highest be to thee, our Lord ! Adored be thy great name ! Blessed be thy admirable counsel of love, which devised the wondrous scheme of redemption ! Blessed be thou for thy undefiled conception and birth ! Blessed be thou for thy sinless childhood, yea, for thy entire holy life, and for each hour of it ! Blessed be thou, O Lord Jesus, for thy innocent sufferings, and for every variety of pain, which thou didst endure ! Especially, be thou praised for each drop of thy blood, shed on many occasions on our behalf ! Blessed be thou for all thy sacred wounds, and for each individually ! Blessed, blessed be thou to all eternity !

Blessed be thy faithful loving heart for all the grace and favour shown me ! Blessed be thy most holy soul, for the great labour, agony, and hell-like anguish, which it underwent ! Praised be thy divine understanding, that

its unfathomable depths of wisdom and knowledge were employed to secure my salvation ! Praised be thy eternal purpose of love, which so earnestly resolved on my salvation, and so effectually persevered in seeking it ! Praised be thy sinless conscience, which was ready to suffer my abominable sins to be imputed to it ! Praised be all thy holy affections and passions, which sought and longed for my salvation ! Praised be thy honourable head, which submitted to be crowned with thorns, and smitten with a reed ! Praised be thy most beautiful face, for all the blows and spitting which it endured ! Praised be thy comely cheeks, which were rudely struck, and had the hair mercilessly plucked off from them ! Praised be thy lovely mouth for all the precious words that it uttered,—for all the earnest prayers which it offered,—and, especially, for the last seven sentences, which it spoke from the cross ! Praised be thy condescending ears, which patiently heard the mockeries and blasphemies of thy foes, and which listen to the cry of my miseries, and the voice of my unworthy supplications ! Praised be thy whole holy body, which thou didst offer up for my redemption ! O our compassionate Saviour and Redeemer, whom we can never sufficiently love and adore, may millions on millions of thanks be unceasingly offered to thee !

But what, alas ! do all my thanks avail ? So weak, so imperfect, so polluted, so insufficient are they, that I cannot praise thee adequately for even one drop of thy blood ; how much less, then, for all that thou hast done and suffered for me ! Do thou, thyself, enable me to offer such praise as thou canst approve, for thy glorious redeeming work, and for thy holy gospel, the glad tidings of that free grace, which, through it, God offers to a miserable world of sinners !

Moreover, I would humbly praise thee for the privilege thou hast granted me, of performing this sweet labour.

Oh, wash off with thy pure blood the stains of sin, which, on account of my weakness, may attach to it! Grant to me, and to every reader, a rich blessing upon it, through the merits of thy blood; and, for thy tender love's sake, accept and approve my feeble attempt! O Lord Jesus, glorify thyself by even these few, humble pages! Thou art acquainted with the main object of my writing them: let me but realize it, and it sufficeth me. O Lamb, once slain, worthy art Thou to receive praise, and honour, and adoration, and power, and glory, and blessing, for ever and ever!

O Lamb of God! impart
This urgent, last request,
Betroth my undivided heart,
In covenant blest!
May I, thy bride elect,
To thee through life adhere;
And hourly on thy woes reflect,
With sacred fear.

I'd tune to grateful lays,
My poor unworthy voice,
At every pulse repeat thy praise,
And loud rejoice:
Yea, all thy love survey
In humble, glad surprise,
And henceforth yield me to thy sway,—
Thy blood-bought prize.

O be thy love my food,
Thy grace, my vital breath,
Through which my life and peace accrued
From thy cruel death:
And thou'lt appoint my place.
Amidst thy ransomed throng,
To chant, before thy Father's face,
An endless song.

O Lamb of God! thy worth,—
Thy rich, redeeming grace,—
There's none in heaven, and none on earth,
Can fully trace!--
Man's richest meed of praise
Is despicable pelf!--
No fit reward can creatures raise:—
REWARD THYSELF.

